FICTION BY LOUISE ERDRICH / HUMOR BY ROY BLOUNT JR.

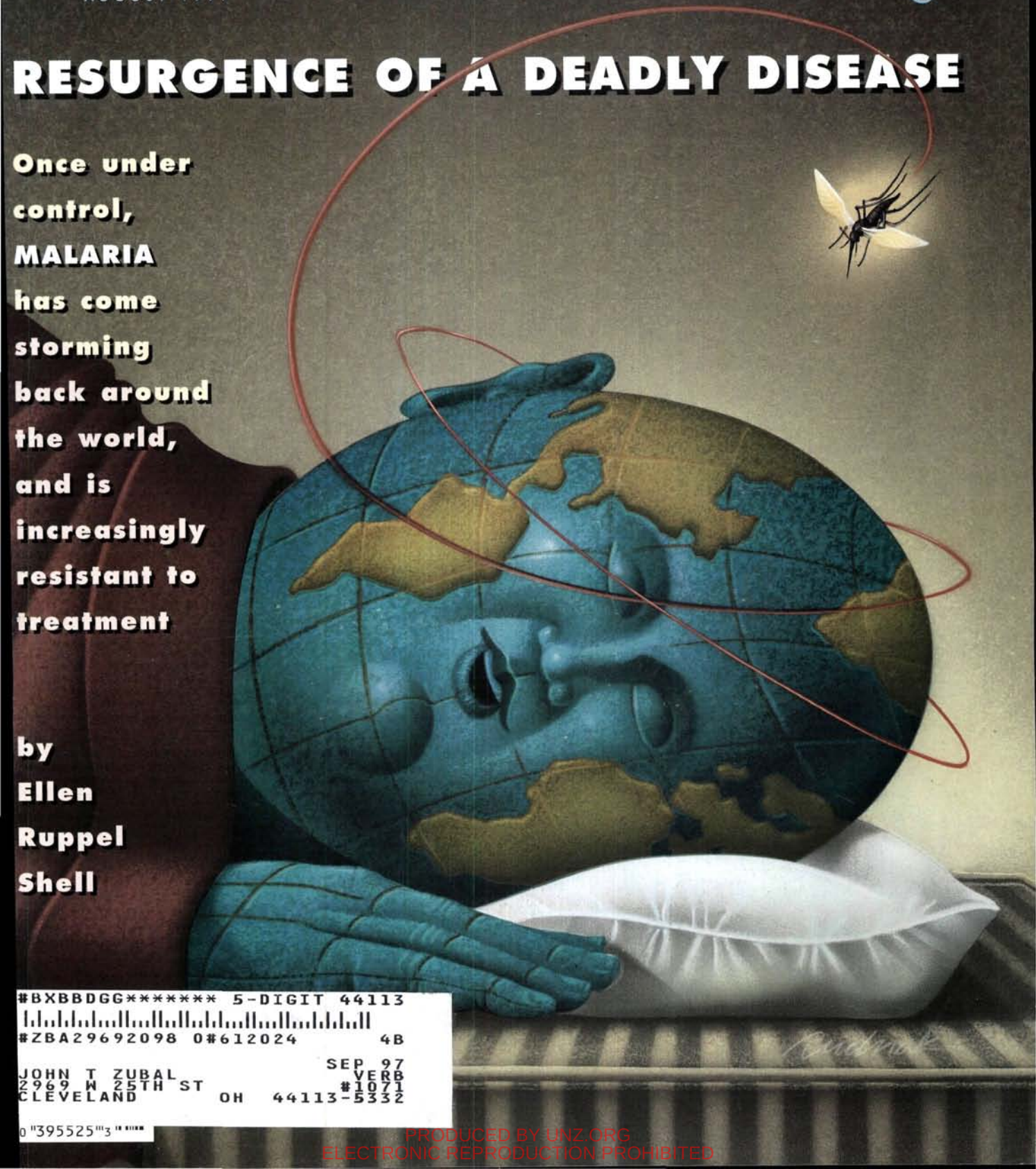
The Atlantic Monthly

AUGUST 1997

RESURGENCE OF A DEADLY DISEASE

Once under control, MALARIA has come storming back around the world, and is increasingly resistant to treatment

by Ellen Ruppel Shell



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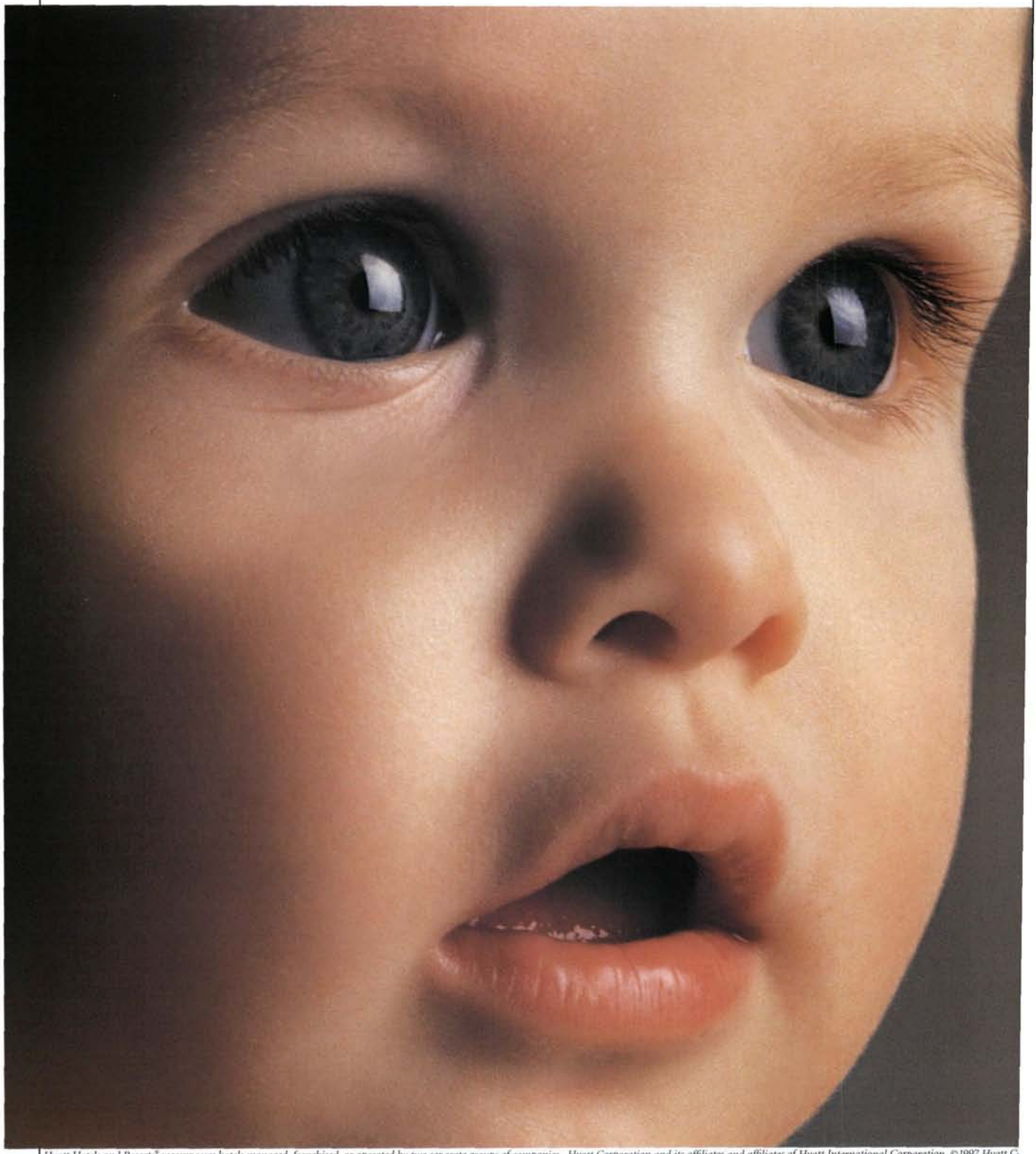

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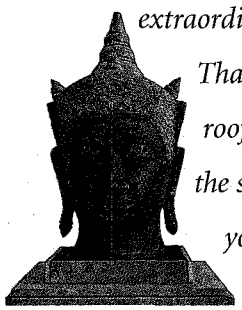

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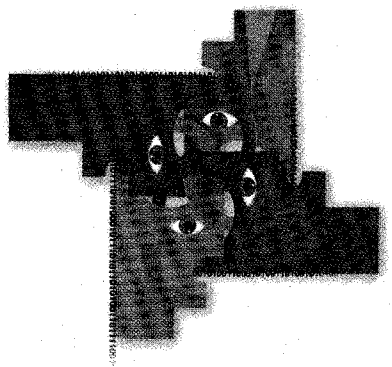

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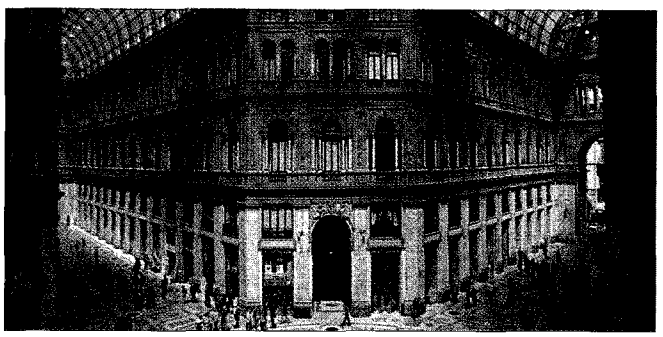

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Glamour

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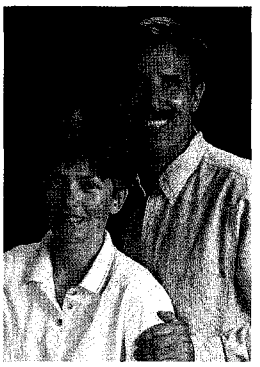
77 NORTH WASHINGTON STREET

In the mid-1970s the editors of *The Atlantic Monthly* decided to add a new feature to the magazine—one that would engage readers on an utterly different level. They put out the word that *The Atlantic* sought to introduce a monthly puzzle, and a rivulet of crosswords, rebuses, and idiosyncratic word games began to trickle in. Most were too easy, or humdrum: *The Atlantic*'s readers deserved a challenging puzzle from whose solution they could derive well-earned satisfaction. At last such a puzzle appeared—a clever and intriguing crossword in the style known as cryptic (so called because the real meaning of its clues is veiled). It became "Short and Sweet," the first Atlantic Puzzler, published in September of 1977.



The authors of "Short and Sweet," Emily Cox and Henry Rathvon, have delivered puzzles of increasing deviousness and sophistication every month since. "Scoreboard," in this issue, completes their twentieth year as *Atlantic* contributors—and, we are delighted to say, they show no signs of flagging.

Cox, a native of Pennsylvania, attended Tufts University. Rathvon grew up on Long Island and graduated from Bennington College. Cox was working for a consulting firm in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Rathvon was a doorman on Boston's Commonwealth Avenue, giving free rein to his antic brain, when the two met and joined forces, in 1975. They began making puzzles as a hobby, and discovered cryptics only a few months before submitting "Short and Sweet." Soon they had quit their jobs to pursue puzzle-making full time.

Since 1985 their crossword puzzles have appeared in *The Boston Globe* on alternate Sundays. They also create puzzles regularly for the Dell Champion magazines, *George*, *Roll Call* (a newspaper for and about members of Congress), and *Attaché* (a U.S. Airways in-flight magazine). Their most recent book is *The Random House Guide to Cryptic Crosswords* (1995).

Cox and Rathvon live in Hershey, Pennsylvania. Armed with an arcane reference library that includes *Animal Quotations* and *Herbst's Backword Dictionary*, they spend up to two weeks crafting each Atlantic Puzzler. They are voracious consumers of music—Chicago blues, Cajun two-steps, Congolese rhumbas—and describe their longtime devotion to the Boston Red Sox as "an addiction worse than wordplay."

Readers who solve "Scoreboard" will be joining us in commemorating the authors' anniversary. —THE EDITORS

CONTRIBUTORS

Roy Blount Jr. ("Diamond Nuggets") is a contributing editor of *The Atlantic* and a columnist for *The Oxford American*. His most recent book is *Roy Blount's Book of Southern Humor* (1994). Blount is at work on a memoir, to be published next spring.

Louise Erdrich ("Satan: Hijacker of a Planet") is the author of several books of fiction, including *Love Medicine* (1984), *The Bingo Palace* (1994), and *Tales of Burning Love* (1996).

James Fallows ("Zoot!") is the editor of *U.S. News & World Report* and a contributing editor of *The Atlantic*.

Marshall Jon Fisher ("Artful Restorations") is a freelance writer and a coauthor, with David E. Fisher, of *Tube: The Invention of Television* (1996).

Frank Kermode ("The Academy vs. the Humanities"), a former King Edward VII Professor of English Literature at Cambridge University, is the author of many books, most recent among them a memoir, *Not Entitled* (1995).

Philip Langdon ("Noisy Highways") is a writer and an editor. His book *A Better Place to Live: Reshaping the American Suburb* (1994), which grew out of his cover story in the March, 1988, *Atlantic*, will be published in paperback next month.

Susan Mitchell ("Golden Bough: The Feather Palm") is the Mary Blossom Lee Professor of English at Florida State University. Her most recent book of poems, *Rapture* (1992), was a National Book Award finalist and the winner of the Kingsley Tufts Poetry Award.

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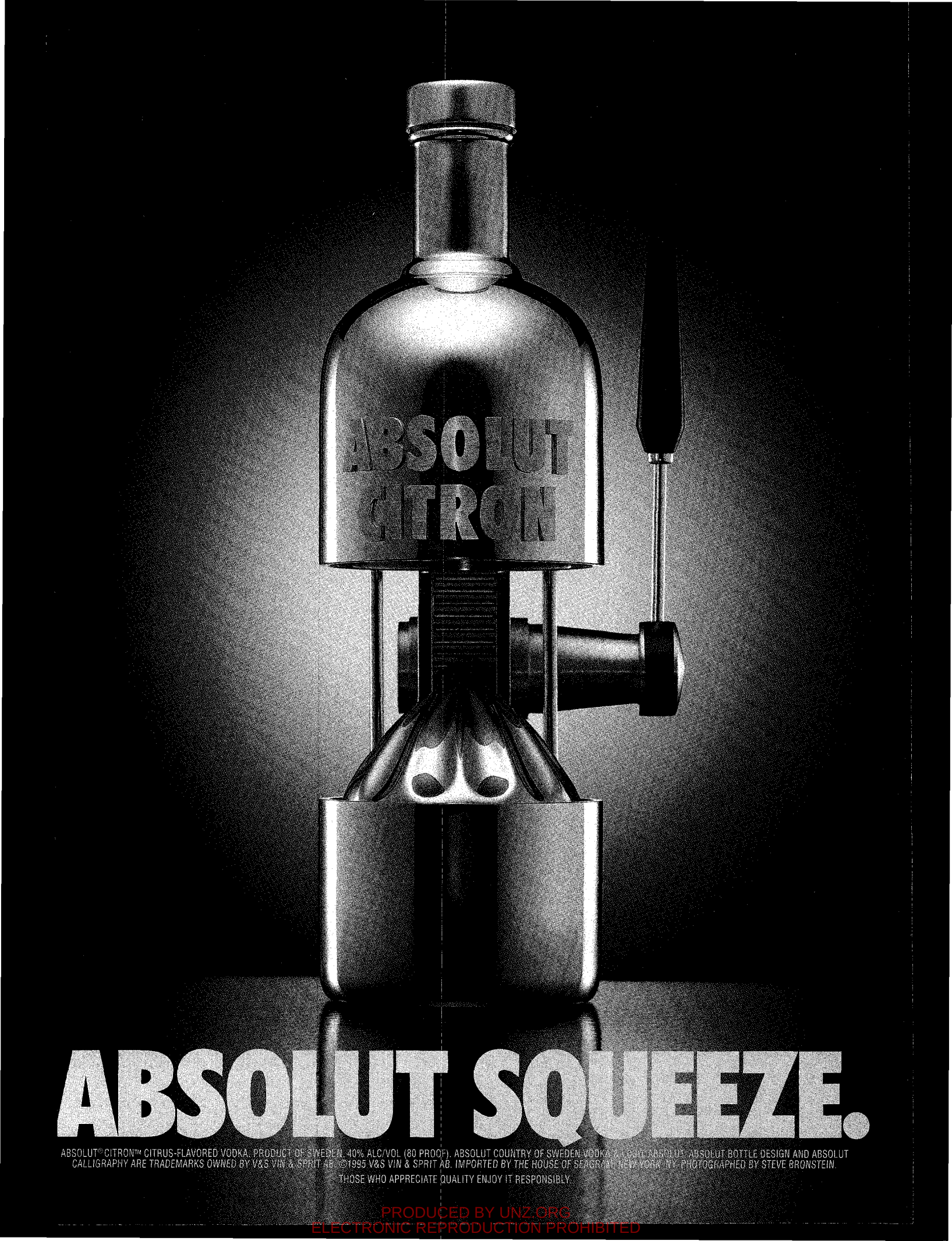

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LETTERS

Race Problems

Randall Kennedy's otherwise excellent article "My Race Problem—and Ours" (May *Atlantic*) is flawed by his premise of the "unencumbered self"—the notion that individuals should not be bound by aims and attachments they did not choose for themselves. By that logic the siblings of a retarded person would have no moral obligation to care for him (or her), since they did not choose to give him birth and he hasn't done anything for them.

Fortunately, Kennedy's argument does not have to rest on such mean-spiritedness. His argument is not against obligations to a larger community; it is against defining community in terms of skin pigment. Indeed, some of his remarks suggest that we do have obligations beyond "chosen" ones. He contends, for example, that the difficulties that disproportionately afflict black Americans "are not 'black problems'. . . . They are *our* problems, and their solution or amelioration is the responsibility of us all, irrespective of race." A devotee of the unencumbered self would snort at that. "What do these problems have to do with *me*?" he would say. "*I* didn't choose them!" The logical reply is that none of us chose them but we're all stuck with them, and must work together to solve them.

George McKenna
The City University of New York
New York, N.Y.

At the core of my Harvard colleague Randall Kennedy's essay is a rather odd notion about America's having become in the post–civil rights era a "colorblind" society—a notion widespread among conservatives. But neither Kennedy nor others who share this outlook can muster serious behavioral or institutional evidence to render it credible. Another odd proposition Kennedy offers is that African-Americans have a special obligation to facilitate the consolidation of today's presumably colorblind society. Although we blacks have surely struggled painfully for an American society free of racism, it must be remembered that we, not white folk, are also the gravely injured party. Which is to say that the main responsibility for rectification belongs to white Americans, and that Kennedy ought to be addressing them, not African-Americans.

In his article Kennedy chastises black scholars like me for viewing "certain students as [their] racial 'brothers and sisters' while viewing others as, well, mere students." This is a simplistic characterization of group-solidarity patterns, for Kennedy thinks that to help X is automatically to neglect Y. But that is not how it works. I and hundreds of black scholars who have assisted in the anxiety-laden and even traumatic adaptation process among black students on white campuses have done so pragmatically, not in a xenophobic way. We have done so in the same pragmatic way that Jewish-American scholars and Irish-American scholars did when they assisted Jewish and Irish students on WASP-dominated campuses. Using group-solidarity patterns at many levels of American life, past and present, is in fact quite common; the real issue is how they are used. Kennedy badly distorts this process.

Martin Kilson
Harvard University
Cambridge, Mass.

Why should black kinship necessarily preclude genuine racial or ethnic integration any more than kinship in any other ethnic group has precluded *its* assimilation into American society? Indeed, it would appear that racial or ethnic kinship and pride have contributed to American social integration, rather than undermined it. So long as it does not evolve into an instrument of confrontation or hate, kinship would appear to promise more good than bad.

Peter D. Goldmann
Ridgefield, Conn.

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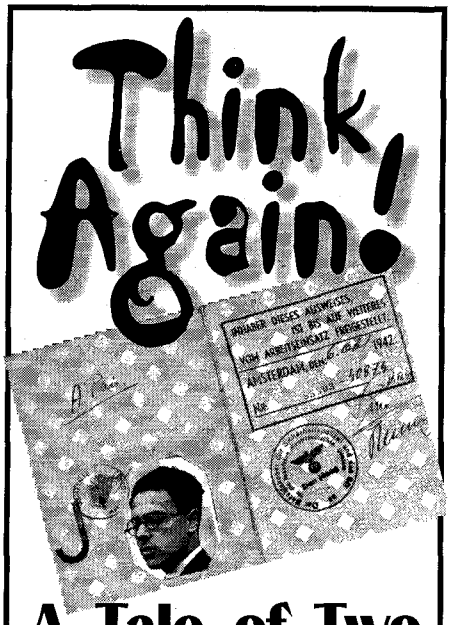

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Restoring Welfare

Peter Edelman's article "The Worst Thing Bill Clinton Has Done" (March *Atlantic*) was an amazing revelation to me. It contained such an old-shoe liberal tax-and-spend philosophy that I would have thought the era of big government was just beginning—not over, as our President has told us. Edelman's shameless appeals in behalf of poor people who can be saved only by government are unfortunate and revealing.

His article's basic thrust is that there will be pain involved for those people who have lived off the blood, sweat, and tears of others all their lives. Edelman assumes that it costs more to put them to work (with all the attendant support systems that he deems necessary) than it does to keep them on welfare. Only a liberal could believe such a nonsensical proposition. It would cost nothing at all to let them solve their own problems and next to nothing to help them find work in sorely needed Work Projects Administration–style projects. (Many WPA programs paid less than minimum wage at that time.) Why should they not work for what they receive, like everyone else?

Paul David
Houston, Texas

I grew up poor and white in northern Nebraska. As a child I knew men who never owned a suit but were proud to have raised a family in the Depression and never took welfare. This tremendous reservoir of stoic pride allowed a relatively free and open society to offer rather generous welfare benefits to the needy and not be swamped by the greedy.

Edelman's sixties dream—that welfare should raise people above the level of menial jobs—is the prime source of our welfare nightmare. We paid low-skilled workers more than their labor was worth to remain idle. If they developed marketable skills, they risked losing their handouts and being at least temporarily worse off. So they remained utterly dependent on a stipend that barely sustained them.

Harry E. Beemer
Camden, Ark.

Peter Edelman has obviously never lived among those of whom he writes. I have. While an undergraduate and a divorced single mother, I lived for two years in a subsidized housing project. As I attended college full time and worked diligently in a part-time job, I was regularly ridiculed by my neighbors for improving my ability to support my family. My daughter was also derided for her academic efforts, because, as neighborhood wisdom had it, school don't do you no good. I watched my neighbors collect food stamps and then throw away perfectly good leftovers because the government was paying for it. I saw residents harass local churches to pay their utility bills and then use AFDC funds for cable television with every available premium channel. When, at a particularly desperate point, I considered applying for food stamps, the social worker actually chided me for my painful thrift measures: she encouraged me to run my air-conditioner, turn up the heat, make more long-distance phone calls, and subscribe to cable TV, because the larger bills would qualify me for more assistance. I was so appalled that I vowed never to participate in such a federal shell game.

Jane Williams Ballard
Colonial Heights, Va.

Peter Edelman writes that of the restrictions last year's welfare-reform legislation placed on immigrant access to welfare, "the SSI cuts are the worst." What he fails to mention is that immigrant abuse of SSI was one of the major reasons an outraged Congress chose to include immigrants in the welfare-reform process in the first place.

The number of elderly immigrants on the SSI welfare program skyrocketed 580 percent during 1982–1994. The recipients are typically sponsored for immigration by their adult sons and daughters, who immigrated earlier. The latter sign affidavits certifying that they have the financial resources to support their parents, but later they exploit a loophole and often put the seniors on SSI as soon as they are eligible.

Regrettably, Edelman omits any mention of the role of the senior immigrants' family sponsors. He also does not mention that they tend to be well off. My analysis of the 1990 census data indicated that 75 percent of the sponsors in California had household incomes above the state median. (Thomas MaCurdy, a professor at Stanford University, has found

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similar results, in more detail.) A recent *Los Angeles Times* article even noted that up to 40 percent of the clientele of Vietnamese-American travel agencies in the Los Angeles area consist of elderly Vietnamese SSI recipients—certainly not fitting the picture of financial desperation we associate with welfare users.

Norman Matloff
University of California
Davis, Calif.

Peter Edelman replies:

This group of letters reflects two major points: that the views of Americans regarding welfare are polarized, and that facts and examples can be used to support just about any position or conclusion a person wants to support. Some people cheat and some people have made welfare a way of life when other possibilities were available. But in some places relevant jobs are unavailable or inaccessible, racial discrimination takes a terrible toll, and bad schools and weak opportunity structures condemn all but the most resilient of the next generation to continued poverty. We all need to take care about the breadth of the brush we use to paint the picture of truth as we see it. We can and should insist on personal responsibility, but we need to understand and develop real responses to the structural economic and institutional problems that make so many people in America poor, including so many working people who have never taken a dime of public assistance.

These letters contain two accusations that I do reject: that I live in an ivory tower, and that I am just an old liberal with big-government solutions. I have spent time with and talked to poor people—in cities and in rural areas; people on welfare and working people—for more than thirty years, and I know how much poor people themselves hate the welfare structure that we had in place. Nearly everyone agrees it didn't work. The argument is over whether the cold-shower approach is the way out, especially when children are involved. We need public policy and public investment, including national standards and funding in some areas. Unlike old-fashioned liberals, I call for tremendous private and community involvement, I insist on personal responsibility, and I believe that the place where it all comes together is in the local community.

New Zealand's Economy

In your March issue Lester C. Thurow ("The Revolution Upon Us") supported an argument against "fads" such as deregulation and privatization by citing New Zealand as "a country with zero percent per capita growth in gross domestic product over the past seven years." He is misinformed. Per capita GDP growth in New Zealand was 6.6 percent in the seven years to 1995–1996.

His choice of time period is misleading. New Zealand's economic recovery, generated by a shift to open-market policies such as deregulation and privatization, did not kick in until late 1991. Per capita GDP growth in the past five years has been 0 percent in 1992–1993, 5 percent in 1993–1994, 3.9 percent in 1994–1995, and 1.5 percent in 1995–1996—an average of 2.6 percent a year.

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The growth of real GDP in the fifteen years from 1977 to 1991 in New Zealand—until the second half of the 1980s one of the most regulated economies in the Western world—averaged only 1.2 percent a year. Since then new open-market policies have boosted growth in real GDP to the much higher annual average.

The improvement appears to be sustained and sustainable. During the current economic cycle New Zealand has just bottomed out at a growth rate of two percent, substantially in excess of what used to be our annual average. The Reserve Bank of New Zealand projects average annual GDP growth at 3.1 percent for 1999–2000.

W. F. Birch
Minister of Finance
Wellington, New Zealand

Lester Thurow replies:

Minister Birch had better coordinate with the International Monetary Fund and its publication *International Financial Statistics* on New Zealand data, because they report one percent growth in real per capita GDP from 1989 to 1995, which rounded off is zero percent per year. Perhaps the Minister has forgotten to make a correction for inflation.

It is also elementary statistics that one has to make income comparisons peak to peak or trough to trough to eliminate the effect of the business cycle. Starting in a recession, 1991, and stopping in an upswing, 1996, isn't statistically kosher.

New Zealand's economic recovery may not have begun until late 1991, but its reforms were all in place five years before then. One has to start keeping track of effects based on when the programs started, not at some arbitrary but convenient date that leaves out all the bad years.

Looking forward, even if the New Zealand economy were to grow at a rate of 3.1 percent, that would not be a performance justifying a ranking at the top of the world competitiveness tables.

Embryos and Retirees

In "Abortion in American History" (May *Atlantic*), a review of Leslie J. Reagan's *When Abortion Was a Crime*, Katha Pollitt writes,

> Reagan suggests that the abortion debate is really an ideological struggle over the position of women. How free should they be to have sexual experiences, in or out of marriage, without paying the price of pregnancy, childbirth, and motherhood? How much right should they have to consult their own needs, interests, and well-being with respect to childbearing *or anything else*? (italics mine)

I am one of those obscure and ordinary women to whom Reagan refers. Why should I have to pay the price for caring for my aging parents? Why should I, the result of *their* sexual experience, be expected to care for them? Don't I have the right to consult my own needs, interests, and well-being?

This leads me to high thanksgiving for the work of Dr. Jack Kevorkian, who is paving the way to the happy answer for us all! A modest proposal: once a person becomes unwanted for some reason—too much of a burden, too expensive to provide with care, or (heaven forbid!) infringing on the rights and freedoms of women—let's drive him or her to a life-termination clinic. We can staff each clinic with a doctor who can administer a lethal injection, a grief counselor, and maybe an ecumenical chaplain.

If my mother had the legal right to stop my beating heart, why shouldn't I have the legal right to stop hers?

Mary Vassar Hitchings
Lookout Mountain, Ga.

Katha Pollitt replies:

Mary Vassar Hitchings's letter exemplifies the very argument she attempts to ridicule. She mocks Professor Reagan's well-documented contention that, historically, opposition to legal abortion has been connected to fears that women would reject traditional roles and create social havoc; but she herself seems to think that legalization may encourage a woman to refuse to care for her elderly parents or even to have them murdered! Abortion is legal right now, yet women continue to shoulder most of the burden of caring for the sick and the old, not to mention children; no movement of daughters and daughters-in-law calls for the right to kill their aged relatives. But, of course, a woman may decide for herself how involved she will be in elder-care. Surely Ms. Hitchings approves of this, and would not favor a law forcing women, and only women, to shoulder this burden—and to do so no matter what the cost to themselves.

Advice & Consent

As a recently retired English teacher, I found your April cover and its implications deeply insulting. The woman with the chalk and the badge is obviously the stereotypical English teacher. The picture ranks right up there in subtlety and wit with responses I've encountered when people learn my occupation—such as the sensitive "English was my worst subject" and the ever-popular "Oh, you're an English teacher. I guess I'd better watch my grammar, huh?"

Having known hundreds of English teachers in my life, I can say with certainty that they are, as a profession, the most *varied*, the most interesting, the most humane, and the most caring single group of men and women I have met or can imagine. Not every one is all of those—but you get the picture. And I'd venture to say that most of us oppose English-only laws because we recognize that they are prompted by thinly disguised racism and xenophobia.

Presumably your cover was meant to be amusing—an attention-getting caricature. But I say, with Queen Victoria, "We are not amused."

Margaret Coffey
Spokane, Wash.

I would like to point out an error in "The Man Who Counts the Killings," by Scott Stossel (May *Atlantic*).

On pages 87–88 the author refers to my longitudinal research, in which we studied children at ages eight, nineteen, and thirty. Whereas he states the results obtained at three different stages accurately, he says that although the "study did not make a special effort to control for other potentially violence-inducing variables, other longitudinal studies have done so." In the next sentence he cites Monroe Lefkowitz as producing one such study. Actually this is the very same longitudinal study; I was the second author of the reference cited as an example of such controls.

Leonard D. Eron
Ann Arbor, Mich.

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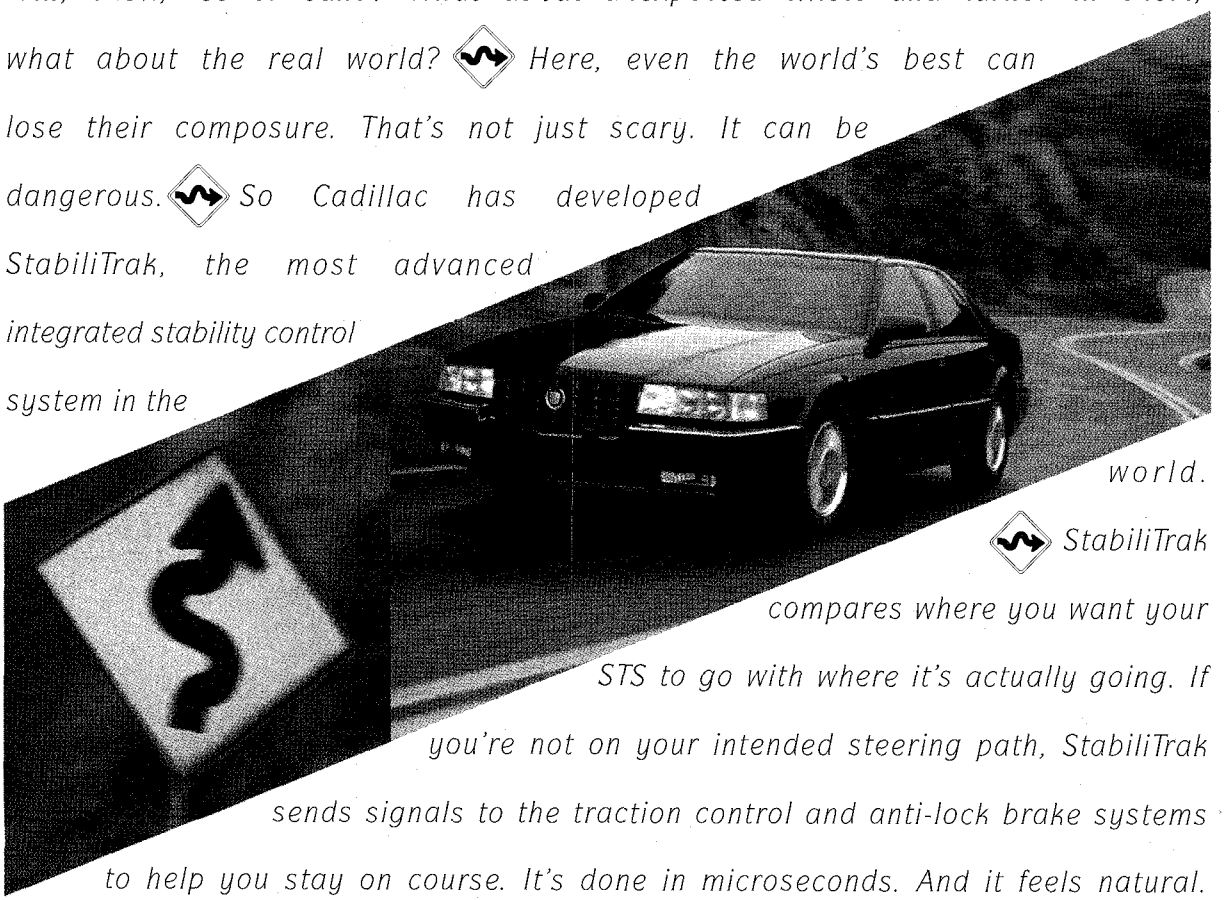

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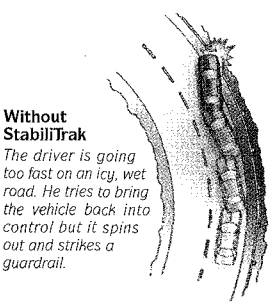

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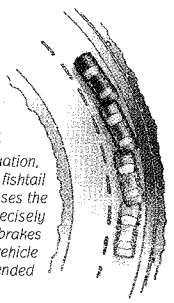
The driver is going too fast on an icy, wet road. He tries to bring the vehicle back into control but it spins out and strikes a guardrail.



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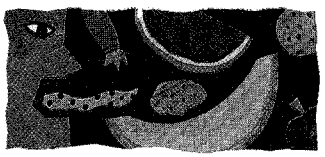
THE AUGUST ALMANAC

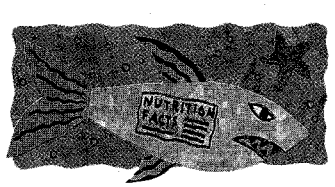


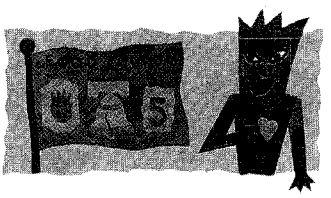
Health & Safety

Ragweed will begin blooming this month, setting off allergic reactions in millions of Americans. Increasing their misery in many cases will be cross-reactions—discomfort from substances that cause particular problems in the presence of ragweed pollen. Cross-reactions occur when proteins that are similar to those in some common allergens are found in other substances; sensitized by the primary allergen, the immune system may release antibodies to the second, otherwise relatively innocuous, substance as well. Cross-reactions can range from mild itching of the tongue, mouth, or throat to congestion and a runny nose to hives, wheezing, and even anaphylactic shock. Foods that may cause cross-reactions in people allergic to ragweed include, in order of decreasing severity, chamomile, cantaloupe, honeydew, and watermelon; for those allergic to birch pollen, another common allergen, cross-reactors include hazelnuts and wintergreen.

Food

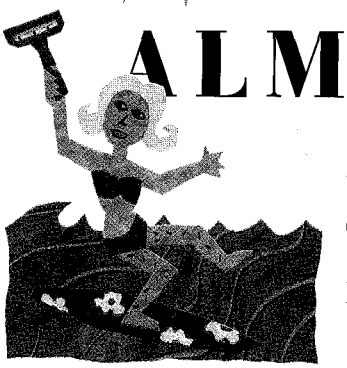
Another element of the sweeping Nutrition Labeling and Education Act of 1990 falls into place today, as the Food and Drug Administration's revised guidelines for voluntary labeling of raw fruits, vegetables, and fish go into effect. The act, which established the uniform nutrition labeling now found on most packaged foods, charged the FDA with identifying the 20 most frequently consumed items in each of these three categories, providing retailers with labeling values and practices, and ensuring "substantial compliance" (unless at least 60 percent of all stores adopt this labeling voluntarily, it will be required by law). This month's regulation is aimed at making the content and presentation of this information consistent with the nutrition labeling on packaged foods. However, because the foods in question are often wet or dirty and may be sold unpackaged, stores can use brochures, notebooks, or posters, rather than actual labels, to provide the information.





Government

August **22**: Most of the nation's legal immigrants who have not become U.S. citizens lose their eligibility for food stamps today, because of a provision in last year's welfare-reform bill. Exceptions will be made for veterans, for those who have been granted political asylum, and for those who have been working in the United States for at least 10 years. As many as one million immigrants may be affected. Noncitizens were also slated to lose eligibility for Supplemental Security Income (payments to the elderly, blind, and disabled) and Medicaid today. However, if Congress approves the present budget agreement, SSI and Medicaid will be continued for all those who resided here by last August 22, when the welfare-reform bill was signed; those who are currently disabled; and those now living here who become disabled in the future. President Clinton lobbied for these restorations amid widespread protests over the cuts.

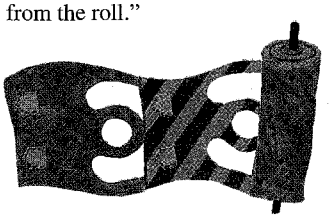


Demographics

More razors are sold in August than in any other month, owing to more-revealing summer clothing, which prompts women to shave more often than usual. Gillette, which controls about two thirds of the U.S. razor market, expects to sell at least 800,000 razors to women this month, as compared with an average of 600,000 in other months. Sales to men remain relatively constant year-round. The market for women's shaving products has been booming in recent years, sparked by the introduction, in 1992, of a Gillette razor designed specifically for women's legs (previously, most "women's razors" were simply pink versions of the razors sold to men). Perhaps not surprisingly, with the boom has come a great deal of research into shaving differences between the sexes. Some findings to date: although men tend to view shaving as a skill, women—who shave about nine times as much surface area as men do—see it as merely a chore. And most men blame the razor for cuts, whereas women generally blame themselves.

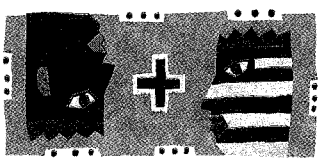
Expiring Patent

No. 4,215,432. Roll of Disposable Aprons. "A roll of plastic film aprons . . . wound on a core support, [with] perforations extending transversely thereof at predetermined spaced intervals to enable tearing discrete [aprons] from the roll."



The Skies

August **3**: Mars lies very near the bright star Spica low in the southwestern sky just after sunset tonight. **9**: Jupiter, which dominates the sky all month, is at opposition today—it is on the side of Earth opposite the Sun—and so rises as the Sun sets. **12**: The Perseid meteor shower peaks tonight; viewing will be best after the Moon sets, around midnight. **18**: Full Moon, also known this month as the Corn and Grain Moon and, among the Sioux, the Moon When the Cherries Turn Black.



100 Years Ago

W.E.B. DuBois, writing in the August, 1897, issue of *The Atlantic Monthly*: "The Negro is a sort of seventh son, born with a veil, and gifted with second-sight in this American world,—a world which yields him no self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others. . . . One ever feels his two-ness,—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings. . . . The history of the American Negro is the history of this strife,—this longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double self into a better and truer self. In this merging he wishes neither of the older selves to be lost. . . . He simply wishes to make it possible for a man to be both a Negro and an American without being cursed and spit upon by his fellows, without losing the opportunity of self-development."

Illustrations by Robin Ghelerter O'Connell

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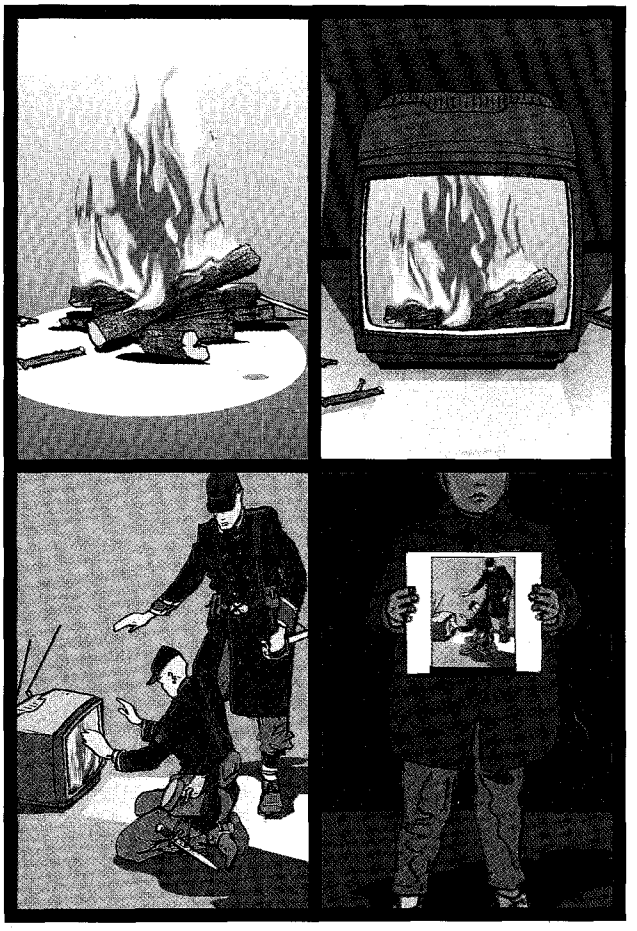
The Real Thing

When everything has been simulated, will reality be chic?

by Cullen Murphy

I HAD been reading and hearing for years about the broad popularity of Civil War "re-enactments," and yet until a recent chance encounter had never seen one for myself. A battle materialized in a field I happened to be passing, near a highway thick with traffic and within sight of modern homes. A sulfurous swirl of gun smoke hung above the tall grass as Union cavalry dashed into the open, from behind a fitness course. In various places men lay motionless, red stains spreading across their uniforms. From time to time the almost soothing fusillade of riflery was overwhelmed by a disruptive discharge of cannon.



I have no idea how any of the participants felt about the issues that were actually at stake in the Civil War, but they seemed deeply committed to the integrity of the simulation itself. In addition to the Yankee and Rebel combatants the re-enactors included nurses and water boys, journalists and field artists, all of them unshakably faithful to character. When they replied to questions, they often did so in a hill-country, border-state twang, and exclusively from within a nineteenth-century perspective.

One dashing man in an ornate uniform that evoked light opera, sporting a moustache and a cane, seemed at once properly matched to the time period and also somehow out of place as he viewed the proceedings from atop a strategic knoll. What Civil War role could this dapper fellow be playing? He responded to a query with aristocratic forbearance, affecting an Italian accent. He was, he said, the military observer of the House of Savoy.

▪ ▪ ▪

Americans enter easily into the spirit of simulation. The very premises of our culture condition us to the legitimacy of reinvention, a process that for many starts with becoming American in the first place. Historians and novelists have been elaborating on this subject, and worrying about its potentially mischievous consequences, for years. The most prominent prophet and expositor of simulation in an American context today is the social theorist Jean Baudrillard, who argues that politics, the news media, entertainment, advertising, the academic disciplines, and just about everything else now consist almost entirely of simplified or sophisticated simulacra of the formerly real. "To dissimulate," Baudrillard has written, "is to pretend not to have what one has. To simulate is to feign to have what one doesn't have."

Baudrillard, with his semiotic tropes and his insatiable revulsion for the American way of life, can be a little hard to take, but he has a point. Leave aside those instances in which simulation is overt—the simulations done in the name of science and industry, the "role playing" promoted for reasons of therapy or empathy, the re-creations and dramatizations found on television, the electronic pastimes encompassed by the word "virtual"—leave all of these aside, and the seep of simulation into ordinary life will seem unremitting nonetheless.

Illustration by Istvan Banyai

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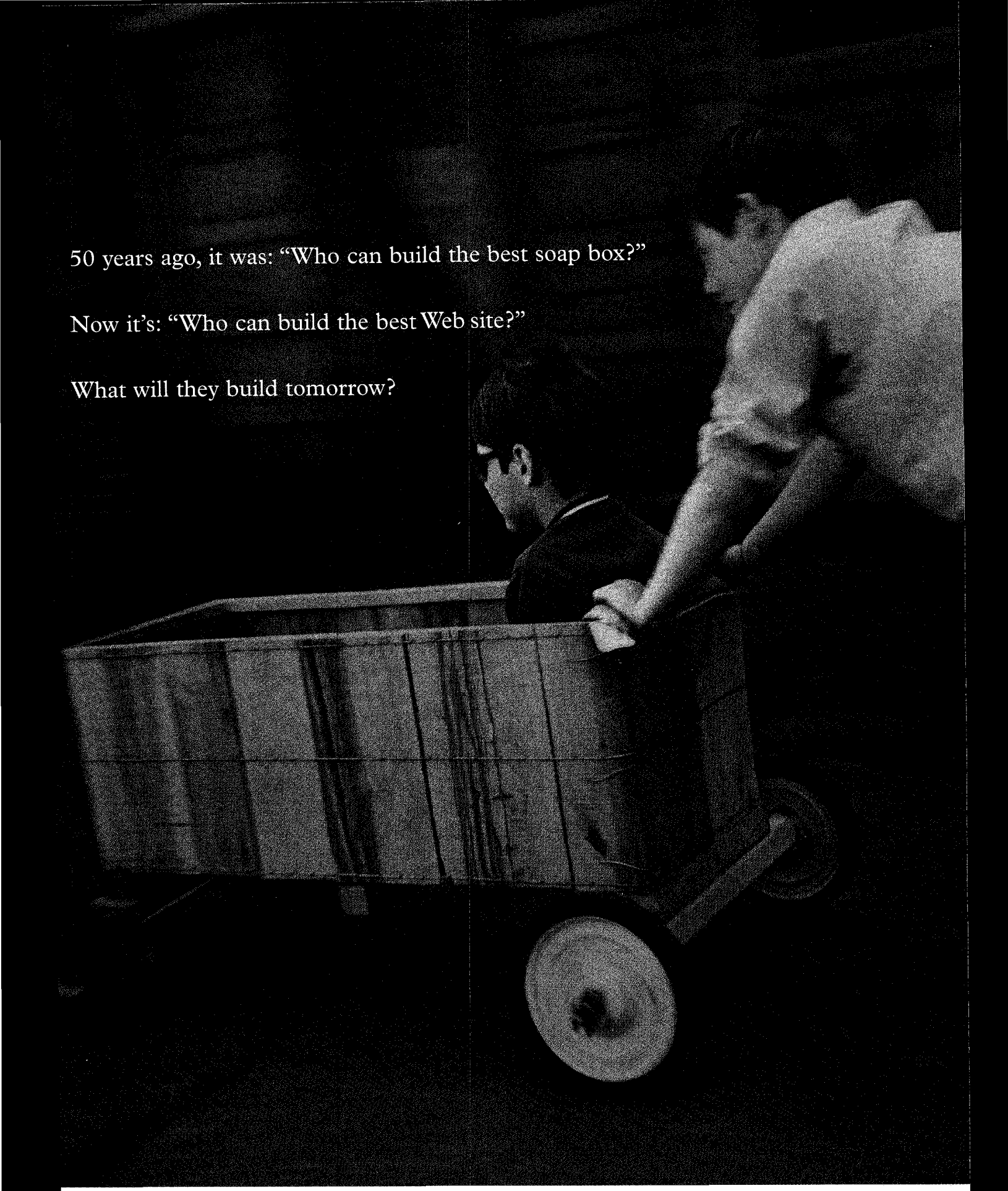

Transistor Radio Home VCR CD-ROM WebTV™ What's next?

SONY

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In the New York metropolitan area a television station is known for broadcasting during the Christmas season a fire burning in a fireplace; the station has been tuned in by more than 250,000 households at a time. Not long ago I received in the mail a brochure for Take Two Photocraft, a company offering "a creative new process that takes the art of photography a step beyond the camera." Do you have favorite pictures to which you wish some missing person could be added, or from which you wish someone could be subtracted? Take Two will make appropriate revisions with seamless guile—$55 for additions, $119 for subtractions (the higher fee no doubt covering disposal of the negative). The Franklin Mint continues to run prominent advertisements in national publications selling a manufactured item that is in effect being marketed as a simulation of a simulation: "the *only* exact reproduction of Jacqueline Kennedy's famous faux pearls."

The simulation phenomenon affects geographic issues. Having some years ago backed away from its wise policy of never considering requests to have ZIP codes changed, the U.S. Postal Service now faces frequent pressure to allow neighborhoods to change their codes in order to simulate inclusion in more prestigious zones nearby. Also to take advantage of ZIP code cachet, mailbox condominiums have been established in storefronts in many of America's choicest communities, allowing owners of a post-office box to convey the illusion of local habitation. A related sort of cosmetic geoplasty is occurring at the international level, as various Third World countries that were never British colonies seek affiliation with the members-only Commonwealth of Nations. Mozambique, a former Portuguese colony, is the first such applicant to have been granted admission. Other countries that have expressed interest in joining the Commonwealth include Cambodia and Rwanda.

"Everywhere," Baudrillard has written, "we live in a universe strangely similar to the original." There is no point belaboring the omnipropinquity of theme parks, except to note how blind to simulation we sometimes can be. One of my children, on a school visit to the Washington, D.C., area, took a side trip to a major local amusement park, part of which features streets made to look like the streets in various countries of Europe. The official itinerary for the afternoon read simply, "Germany, England, Italy, France." Environments that are "themed," to use the industry jargon, are not confined to amusement parks—they also take shape as hotel lobbies, pedestrian malls, entire rehabilitated downtowns. And they constitute, in the words of one commentator, "the most powerful trend in American architecture." So much lightweight material, including plastic designed to simulate nonplastic, is now used in the construction of the physical world that, according to a study published in a recent issue of the journal *Daedalus*, the amount of mass required to build the physical reality around us has on a per capita basis actually begun to decline.

Also being simulated: people. I do not refer here to the artificial foot developed recently for the purpose of sweating mechanically in the service of a shoe manufacturer, or to the common Elvis impersonator, but rather to the ineffable issue of personal identity. A recent survey by Fodor's Travel Publications revealed that three percent of American travelers invent completely new personae for themselves when talking to strangers on planes, buses, and trains. The assumption, perhaps unconscious, that there can exist a stable, separate, simulated self is what underlies, surely, not only participation in Civil War reenactments but also the prevalent verbal tic of referring to oneself in the third person—a practice that for some has become, literally, second nature. In its most extreme version the simulated self may require a surrender of sovereignty—a point brought home during last year's presidential campaign by several published comments from the supply-side-economics proponent Jude Wanniski. Wanniski, an adviser to the Republican vice-presidential nominee, Jack Kemp, described Kemp's political persona as, in essence, a themed environment built on a vacant lot according to specifications provided exclusively by Wanniski (making it, one is tempted to say, the only exact reproduction of Jude Wanniski's faux pearls).

▪ ▪ ▪

The debate over the relative merits of the actual and the contrived is an ancient one, filled with censorious voices. "Men often applaud an imitation," Aesop concluded in one of his fables, "and hiss the real thing." This is not a debate I care to join. But it is perhaps worth wondering, against a background of simulation, whether mundane reality may itself be emerging as something that can be considered radically avant-garde.

Several signs are suggestive. An article in the section of *The New York Times* devoted to the forward lines of lifestyle makes note of a trend: instead of meeting with others socially at restaurants couples are actually *inviting friends over to their homes for dinner*. Another article in the same section reports that members of cutting-edge households are putting photographs of family members into frames and then *making arrangements of the photographs on a wall*. From a different newspaper comes a story about people forsaking conventional psychotherapy and, as psychologists look on with guarded hope, seeking emotional well-being by telling humorous stories to friends and then *joining in the laughter*.

A taste for the honest and elemental, if only as a garnish, is evident on a wide front. In music hardly a group exists nowadays that has not put aside its amplifiers and synthesizers and produced an "unplugged" CD. Food recipes in the best publications are becoming more arduous, as emphasis shifts from artificial ease and speed to the everything-from-scratch ethos that primitive authenticity demands. A recently published catalogue offers household appliances from fifty or a hundred years ago that operate without electricity. At Sotheby's last year four unornamented burlwood bowls were sold for $2,500. There are bars that serve only water to drink, and other bars that serve only oxygen to breathe.

People may hiss the real thing, but from time to time it can still get the upper hand.

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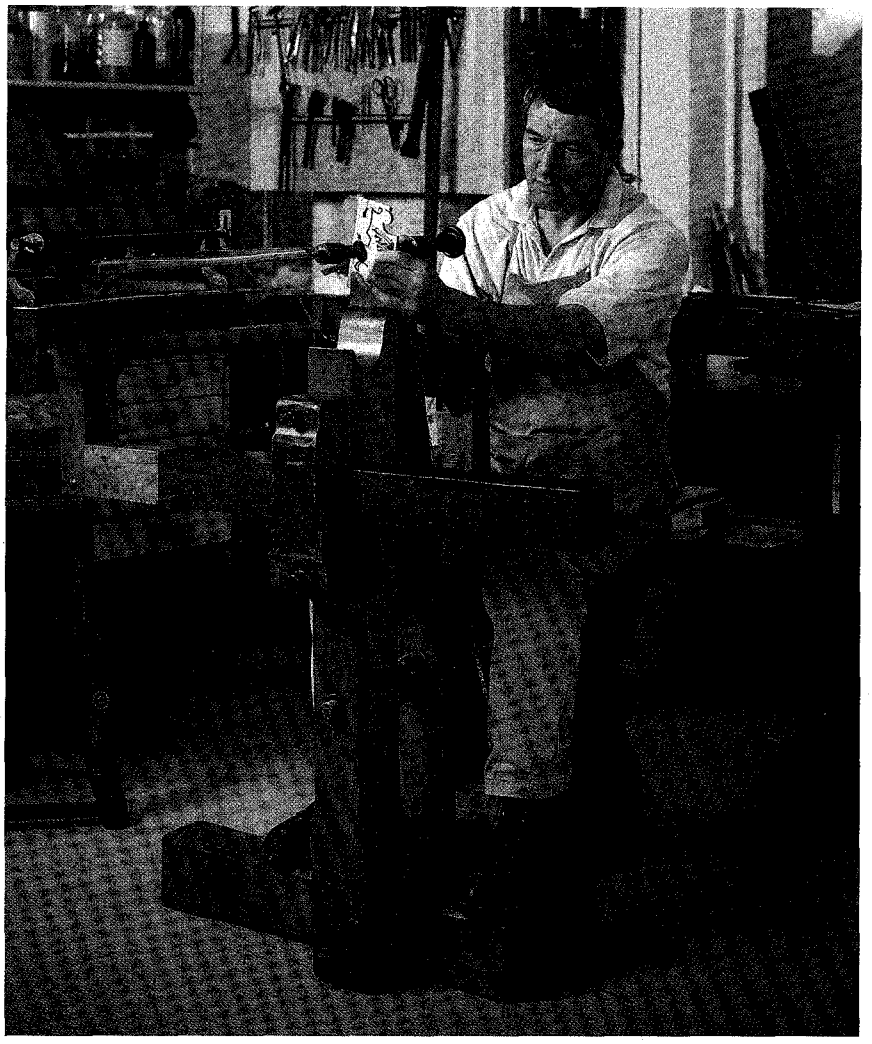

Artful Restorations

An ébéniste brings fine furniture back to life

by Marshall Jon Fisher

DAVID Linker stands over a Louis XIV bureau Mazarin like a surgeon over a car-wreck victim. The pine body, once fit for a monseigneur's dressing room, is chipped and lusterless. The legs, detached and lying on a nearby table, suffer gouges where someone tried to remove whole panels of marquetry. That marquetry—tortoiseshell inlaid with engraved brass, once ornate and as reflective as a mirror—is cracked and peeling; in places it is missing altogether.

Linker shakes his head. "The restorer the owner took it to nearly butchered this thing. This is terrible; he never should have touched it. He should have said, 'This is not what I know.'"

It *is* what Linker knows. He is an *ébéniste*, a French-trained descendant-by-profession of the furniture makers for the Kings of France. Linker, though, generally doesn't build new furniture but rather specializes in restoring antique pieces. An American, he has taken on the estimable challenge of practicing *ébénisterie* in an era when mass production has rendered it anachronistic and in a city, New York, whose language has no word for it.

Ebénisterie arose in the middle of the seventeenth century. It was named for ebony, an important element in the art of marquetry, in which decorative patterns are created with various materials and inlaid on a veneer of ebony or other wood. The *ébénistes*, who at first handled only marquetry but later acquired other skills as well, made French craftsmen the toast of Europe. Their ilk survived the French Revolution, the Industrial Revolution, and the assembly line, but at the end of the twentieth century not many of them ply their trade in Paris, much less on West 18th Street. There are other furniture restorers, of course, many of them highly skilled, but few trained for years in Paris to take their places in an ancient guild. As far as Linker knows, in fact, he is the only French-trained *ébéniste* in New York.

In his eighth-floor Chelsea workshop he and his assistant restore to their glory artifacts of other eras. There is a 1920s Belgian gold-and-tortoiseshell cabinet that was handed down through a Dutch Jewish family, hidden during the Second World War, and shipped to America several years ago; an 1840s Italian table that Linker found, underappreciated, at a Connecticut antique sale; and a nineteenth-century Spanish Renaissance table rescued from an Upper East Side Dumpster. There is also the bureau Mazarin (named for a seventeenth-century French cardinal), which was shipped to Linker by a client in Houston.

Linker's clients range from wealthy collectors to families with prized heirlooms, and he has restored pieces at New York's Gracie Mansion and Trinity Church. Yet in Linker's business word of mouth travels slowly. Few people realize

Photographs by Jacques De Melo

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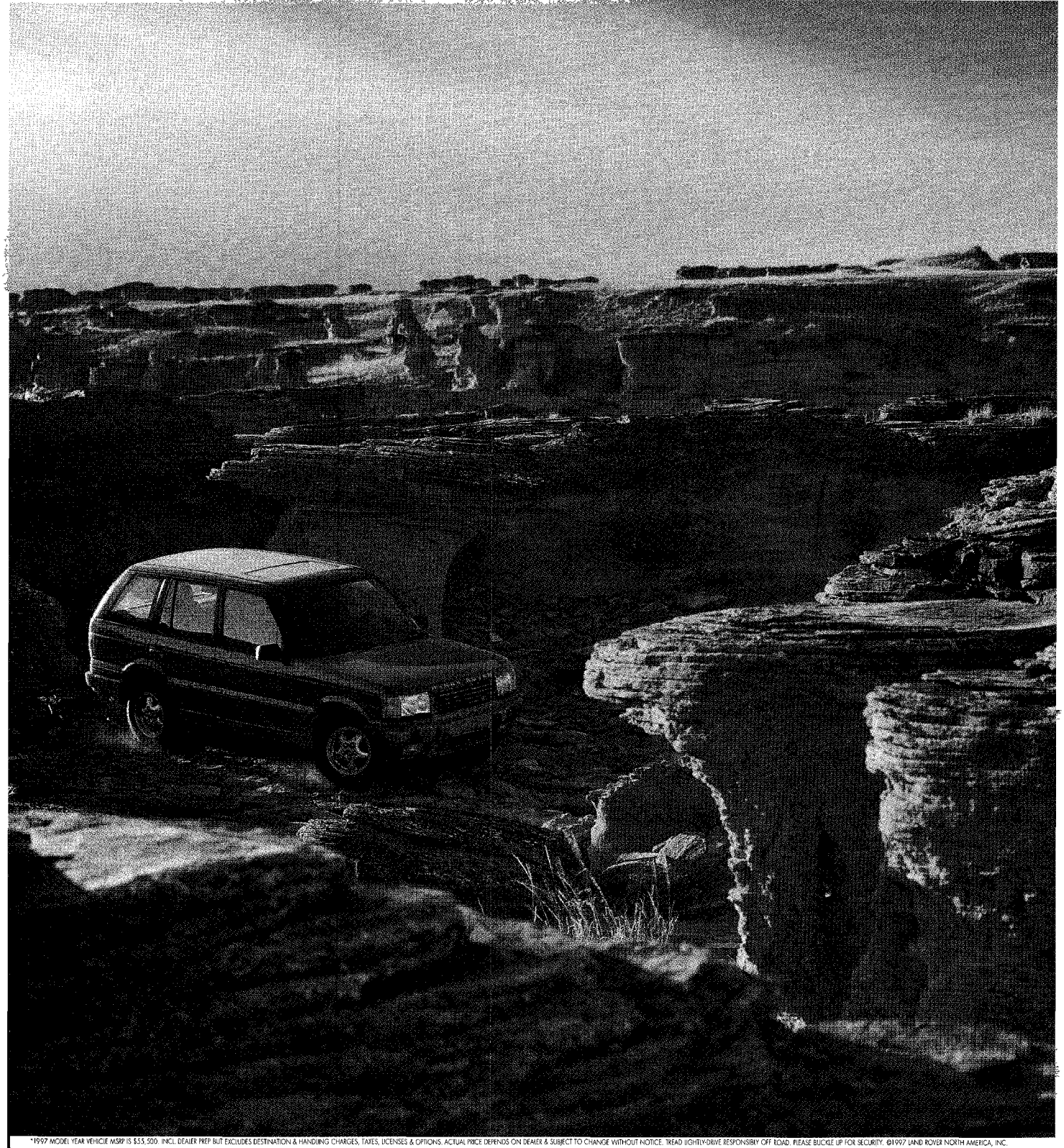

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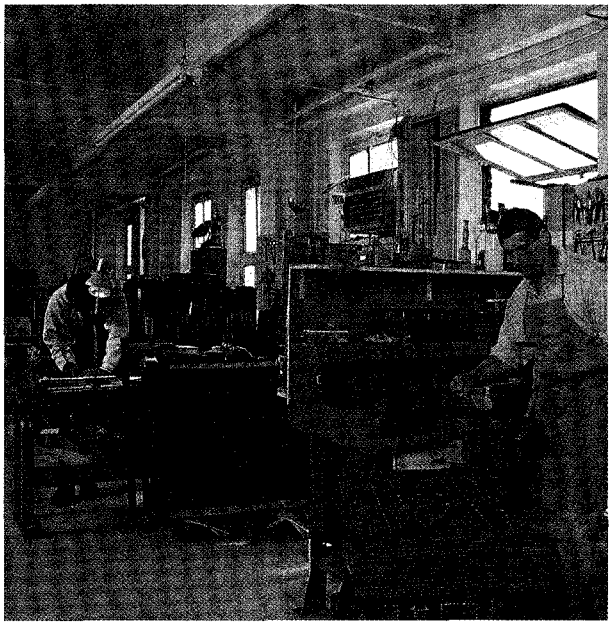
that this kind of work is still being done, and fewer still are willing to pay for the hundreds of hours typically needed to restore a piece with the fastidious perfectionism of the *ébéniste*. "People today have an industrial-era mentality," Linker says. "What we do in this shop is from another era. When people hear about this, they just don't believe we exist."

WHEN Linker muses, "A created object discloses itself to us, and our workshop master taught us to read that object as we read a book," he sounds like a dubbed French film. His accent is vintage Far Rockaway, from the Queens neighborhood where he grew up in the late 1940s and 1950s. (When he speaks on the phone to Parisian friends and colleagues, as he does several times a day, he sounds simply like a French actor.) He spent much of his childhood working in his family's extensive vegetable garden and, with his brother, taking things apart and putting them back together. But his father, a Jewish immigrant from Chernovtsy, in what is now Ukraine, who owned a grocery store and later drove a taxi for twenty-five years, made it clear that the boys should become professionals. Accordingly, Linker studied French literature at City College and then headed for Paris to continue his studies at the Sorbonne.

Linker had every intention of becoming a professor, but, he says, "I had a whole change of spirit when I got to France." He was struck by the skill and attitude of tradesmen of all sorts. A waiter in a café, for instance, "was not a waiter studying to be an actor, he was a waiter in a café," he says. "And he was proud of it, and he was happy." When student protests disrupted the university in 1968, Linker traveled to England, where he found housing on the Portobello Road, London's enormous outdoor antiques center. He repaired furniture to make ends meet, and after a Dutch friend introduced him to the master of a well-known furniture-making school in Holland, he began a four-year training course there. It was in Amsterdam, in the back of the school's workshop, that Linker first met people who were studying to become furniture restorers—a line of work he had never even considered. "I knew the light had finally gone on in my brain," he says. "I saw what I had been trying to arrive at, what I somehow innately wanted to do."

Although Linker didn't know it at that time, his grandfather had been a furniture maker in Chernovtsy; indeed, the trade probably went back generations in the family. Oblivious of this heritage, Linker finished his schooling in furniture making while also completing an apprenticeship with a billiard-table maker. He then returned to Paris, where he joined the famed Cour de Varenne, a workshop specializing in the restoration of France's royal furniture. There he evolved from journeyman to *ébéniste*.



Content in his calling, in a country where he felt more at home than he did in Queens, Linker eventually came to run the restoration workshop of the Parisian decorator Henri Samuel. "I never wanted to come back to America," he says. But with the election of the Mitterrand government in 1981 he was unable to renew his work permit. Reluctantly he returned to New York, and established his own workshop in Brooklyn. By the late 1980s the business was flourishing under the patronage of several major clients, including John T. Dorrance Jr., who had been the chairman of the Campbell Soup Company from 1962 to 1984. Linker became the official restorer of Dorrance's estate in Pennsylvania, and last year he moved his workshop to a sunny 2,500-square-foot loft in Manhattan.

What he moved there, and what he continues to assemble, is a collection of tools, stock materials, and potions worthy of an alchemist's den. For replacing missing marquetry elements he has seashells, tortoiseshell, brass, gold, copper, silver, bone, ivory, and various skins, including shark and stingray. One wall of shelves holds his dyes. He has oil-soluble dyes for coloring waxes and alcohol-soluble dyes for touching up color-degraded shellac finish. For wood he has water-soluble dyes, which produce a more penetrating and beautiful natural tone. And to fill in holes he has nonsoluble dyes, which he melts together with hard shellac.

The recipes for these dyes have been passed from master to master down through the centuries. Only occasionally will Linker deviate from them. "I have one recipe that calls for ten kilograms of nails, some vinegar, and then you're supposed to go to the shed and get a bucket of horse urine," he says. "Well, I'm not going to

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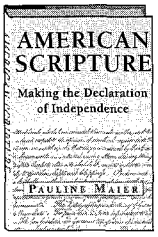

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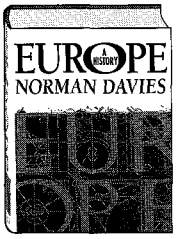

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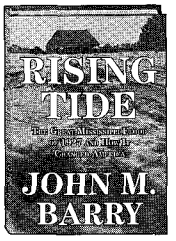

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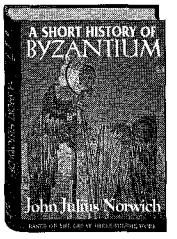

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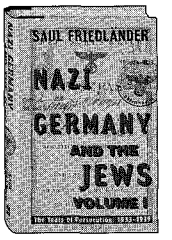

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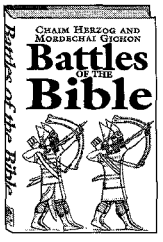

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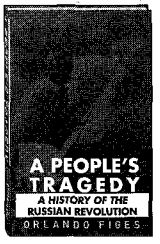

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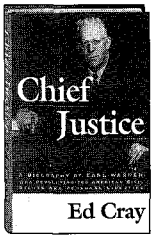

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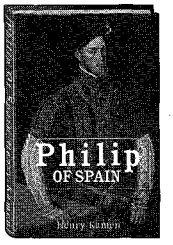

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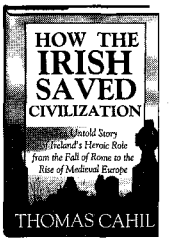

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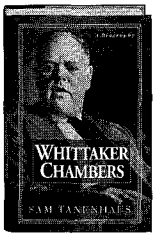

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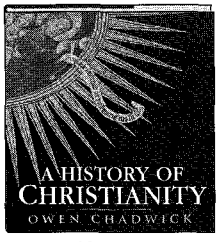

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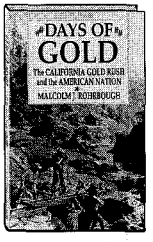

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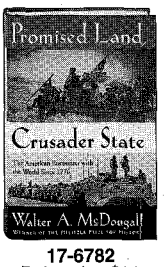

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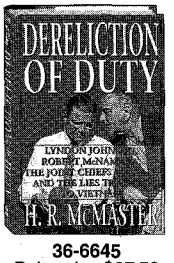

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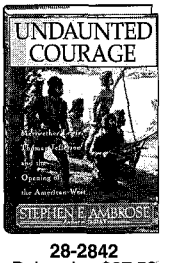

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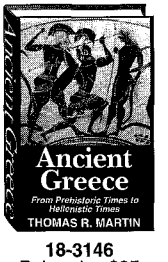

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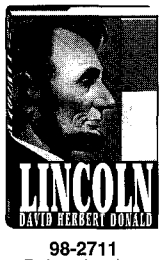

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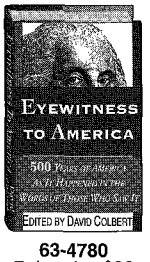

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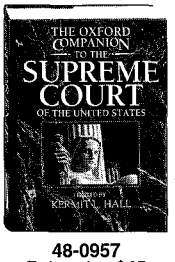

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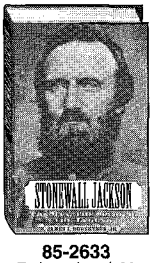

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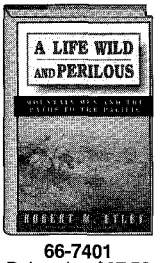

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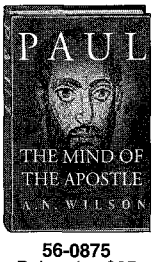

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put nails in vinegar and urinate on it. I know it's just ferric sulfate and uric acid, so I use the chemicals directly."

Next to the dyes are myriad waxes, which enable Linker to reproduce virtually any wax finish he comes across. For instance, to restore a 1630s ebony-veneered Flemish cabinet that once belonged to Rudolf Nureyev, he will mix a black dye with beeswax, palm wax, and paraffin to produce a malleable but very hard wax of just the right hue.

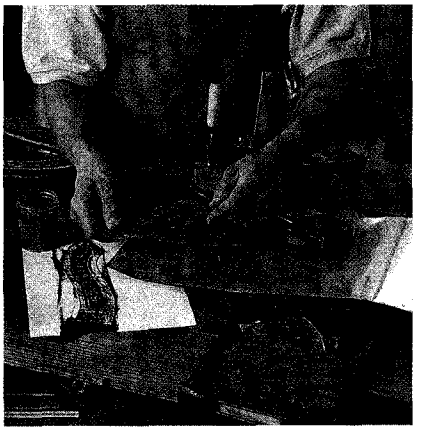
Then there are the glues. Standing over a small gas stove like a witch from *Macbeth*, Linker mixes glues made from bones, nerves, and hides to produce the appropriate adhesive for a 300-year-old commode. When he needs to glue brass, he calls on another ancient trick: mixing garlic with the molten glue, or rubbing cloves against the back of the brass, provides just the right stick. When gluing

onto a flat surface, Linker places a hot zinc plate on top to warm the marquetry, the glue, and the base surface together. For a more challenging surface—for example, a curved leg—he heats some sand and pours it into a cylindrical cloth bag. Clamps hold the leg, the marquetry being glued onto it, a protective layer of paper, and the sandbag. As the leg, glue, and marquetry heat up, the pores in the leg open fully to take in the glue. The entire assembly then cools down, forming a peerless bond.

The star attraction in Linker's cast of treasures, though, is wood. In a back corner of his loft lie shelves full of seemingly ordinary planks. They could be from any carpenter's garage—except that some are centuries old, and some are all but impossible to buy today. One bundle of planks is from the floor of a 1604 Amsterdam house that was being destroyed when Linker lived in that city; he saved the wood and carried it with him to France and then to America. He has accumulated a variety of wood great enough that he can almost always repair his damaged antiques with the genuine article. If, for example, a client should bring him a desk

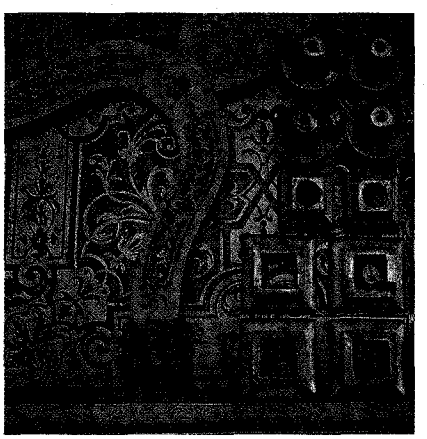
made of Cuban mahogany—a species depleted centuries ago by European loggers—he would have no problem filling its holes and gouges without resorting to a substitution. Squatting down, Linker retrieves from the back corner of the bottom shelf a foot-long cylinder of heavy dark wood. "I bought it from an old marquetry shop in New York that was going out of business," he says. "The owner was from Germany, the last of his line." He turns the wood over; penciled on the bottom is "Cuba Mahogany, 500 years old."

Restoring the original body, glue, and



marquetry, however, is but a prelude to Linker's final act. He walks to a set of jars, opens one, and gently shakes the cloud of orange flakes inside. "Touch that," he says. "Feel how soft it is." These jars contain shellacs for use in a process called French polishing—the crowning touch on most of Linker's work. The shellacs are resins secreted by the lac bug of southern Asia and then scraped off trees. French polish, which was first developed in the mid eighteenth century, is a solution of this shellac in alcohol. Gently rubbing it into wood lets the alcohol evaporate, leaving a fine clear layer that is nonpareil in feel, look, and durability.

Applying French polish is not as easy as it may sound. "It takes years to become an expert French polisher," Linker says. "And that's if you have the talent. Some people can do it, some can't. Graham has the skill." He's watching his assistant, Graham Davis, polish an 1840 Victorian tabletop. Davis went to work for Linker after interning for him during a high school summer-jobs program ten years ago. As he makes circular motions with a soft cotton or linen rag wrapped around a wadding of wool,



the alcohol evaporates off the surface in an evanescent mist. "The shellac that's left," Linker says, "is like a breath. You can't even measure it."

"It's the simplest thing in the world, but it's the most difficult thing in the world," he continues. "Everybody calls their work French polish now, but it's not." The difference is not in the materials but in the technique. The polisher must learn exactly how much pressure to apply. Squeeze too hard and too much alcohol will seep out, burning or dulling the shellac. Not enough muscle and there's no effect: many valuable hours can be wasted. There's no way to fake years of training by a master. "You see it in the Yellow Pages," Linker says, "but that's not real French polish."

It will take about twenty-four hours to French polish the small Victorian tabletop. A larger piece might require a hun-

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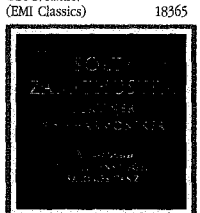

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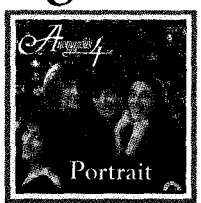

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dred hours. For example, Linker and Davis will polish a bureau for days, working on one part while the shellac on others hardens—thousands of circles of the forearm, leaving microscopic coat after coat, until, Linker explains, "finally the thickness of feel and evenness is there, and it gets to a point when you know that's exactly enough." The result, displayed on several finished pieces in a small gallery in the workshop, looks like a sylvan mirror and feels like butter would if it could be hard and warm at the same time.

"To restore an object," Linker says, traversing his loft to show off his projects in various states of reconstruction, "you have to learn from it how it was made, and then you have to interpret it. There's an enormous communication between you and the object." Linker's devotion to his craft, his ascetic surrender to the demands of an ancient discipline (along with his flat Roman haircut), brings to mind a Benedictine monk. His workshop is his monastery, Davis his lone disciple.

It wasn't always this way. In the mid-1980s Linker had, in addition to Davis, eleven journeymen from all over Europe working for him, along with a chief, or second-in-command. But now his great clients are gone; John Dorrance, whose private collection alone could support a full workshop, was one of a rare breed that, as Linker puts it, "had exquisite taste and understood that furniture should be more than an investment—it should be a personal monument." Without that kind of steady, bountiful patronage Linker can't afford to keep a full house of trainees. "My trade," he says, "which flourished for centuries, is being wiped out by people's attitude: the bottom line. Even though a piece of furniture has been neglected for ninety years or more, they want you to repair it in a few hours."

As if on cue, the owner of the bureau Mazarin shows up. She's in town for a few days and has arranged to drop by to discuss her piece. Her elegant blonde coiffure and swank attire clash with Linker's workmanlike jeans and apron as he cheerfully leads her off to look over her investment. Seeing it dismantled on several tables, she seems taken aback. Linker calmly delivers his prognosis.

First he'll have to clean each part carefully, cutting out the damaged brass and tortoiseshell and saving as much of those elements and of the old glue as possible. Then he'll need to replace the wood that has been gouged out and fill in the chips and holes, making all surfaces perfectly smooth. He'll repair the brass and tortoiseshell bit by bit, replacing missing tortoiseshell with stock from his collection and cutting new bits of marquetry on his eighteenth-century-style marquetry saw, guided by rubbings and photocopies of the existing elements. Then he'll glue everything back onto the body of the bureau, using a carefully pigmented glue. Finally, when everything is intact, he will apply the French polish.

His estimate: a thousand hours of work, or more, at ninety dollars an hour.

Fifteen minutes later he escorts his client to the elevator and returns. "She couldn't put the proper amount of money into it," he explains. "She wanted to cut it into little pieces, make a little night table with part of it, frame some of the marquetry and put it on the wall. My heart sank." Rather than surrender the bureau to such a barbaric intent, he persuaded her to sell it to him for $7,000. It was a tidy profit for her, and Linker, after a couple of years' work, might be able to sell it for ten times as much. "If I can part with it, that is," he says. "I hate to part with my work after I've sweated over it for years. But I have to start doing that now."

David Linker's struggle is not merely to keep a small business afloat but to sustain a dying art. In an age of computer-designed furniture and reverence for the disposable, his is an endangered species. "I trained for a particular trade," he says, "and in that trade there is a balance and a harmony, a respect. There is life worth preserving, there are ideas worth preserving, and there are trades worth preserving. Still, it all goes back to the question you asked earlier: What does it mean to be an *ébéniste* in New York? I ask myself that question all the time. Why do I do this? Why do I put myself through this?"

Even as he speaks, the answer is at his fingertips: they absently caress the surface of an Alsatian walnut armoire from 1630, which he restored a few years ago. The answer is in the perfect patina, the resplendent shine, the soft, warm feel of the finish—like seventeenth-century flesh brought back to life.

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The tracks we left behind weren't ours. Twelve years ago, we went to northwestern Montana in search of oil. And there, in a remote corner of the Blackfeet Indian Reservation, we thought we'd find it. After all, hidden under deposits of sandstone and shale lie countless dinosaur graves and, buried with them, the promise of petroleum. But many steps had to be taken before we could even dig an exploratory well. First we reached an agreement with the tribe over lease rights and royalty payments. We then hired an independent environmental consultant who proposed a number of measures to protect the local grizzly bear population. All of which we adopted – from restricting human access to working straight through winter, then leaving, so the bears could forage undisturbed in the spring.

A number of steps were taken to protect the grizzlies and their habitat: leaving the area to the bears in the spring by working only in the winter; exploring at an elevation far below grizzly dens; restricting human access; prohibiting off-road driving; installing a less obtrusive drill pad and revegetating the area.

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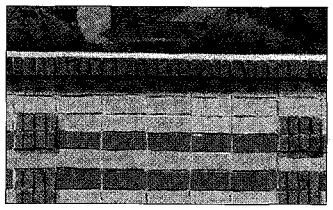

Noisy Highways

Noise barriers give essential protection to people who live near crowded roads—and a growing number of designers are showing that they needn't be eyesores

by Philip Langdon

THERE is a troubling, and worsening, mismatch between Americans' love of personal transportation and the way the nation's highways are shaped. Even in 1916—the year Emily Post published *By Motor to the Golden Gate*, an account of her arduous car trip from New York to San Francisco, and Theodore Dreiser published *A Hoosier Holiday*, the story of his mud-splattered auto journey from New York to his boyhood home in Indiana—it was plain that the future of transportation in the United States was the road, not rail. Motorists were starting to expect paved highways, and plenty of them.

Periodic bursts of improvement in highway design led to the creation of a number of beautiful naturalistic parkways before the Second World War and to the development in the 1950s and 1960s of interstate highways with gradual, easy curves, generous separation of opposing lanes, and much-needed restrictions on billboards. Since then the imagination of American highway builders has fallen into a long slumber, and it has been only minimally roused by a federal program of "transportation enhancements" enacted six years ago. Auto makers shoot car commercials in deserts and on mountaintops, while the highways traveled by millions become ever more prosaic.

In 1968 California built what are believed to be the first noise barriers along modern federal highways. Walls were erected on Highway 101 in San Francisco and Interstate 680 north of San Jose to shield abutting residential neighborhoods from the sound of heavy traffic. Within four years the federal government followed California's lead, adopting regulations requiring that whenever a state builds, expands, or realigns a federally funded highway, an attempt be made to curtail excessive noise that would otherwise be inflicted on sensitive neighbors, such as schools, hospitals, and residential areas. Since then a total of forty-one states have built highway noise barriers, generally with 75 to 90 percent of the cost paid by the U.S. Department of Transportation. Nineteen of those states, including Colorado, Michigan, and Connecticut, have also voluntarily built noise barriers along existing highways where no widening or relocation of the roadway was taking place. In all, noise barriers have risen along some 1,300 miles of federal highway, and they are being added at the rate of ninety to a hundred miles a year. California still leads the nation, with 438 miles of barriers.

Bruce Donohue, a landscape architect in Westport, Connecticut, is aware of the effects that prolonged exposure to highway noise can bring. "One summer when I was a student," he recalls, "I was painting a house along Interstate 95 in Stamford, and I noticed that I was tense. I noticed that the women in the neighborhood were irritated. They were screeching at the kids, and the kids were raucous. The whole neighborhood was irritable and irritated." Road noise does not damage the hearing of people who live close by, but it seems to cause physiological and psychological stress, with results that include nervousness, difficulty in sleeping, and elevated heart rates.

The effects of stress vary so widely from person to person, however, that transportation departments have avoided basing noise-control programs on them. They have focused on something they can assess more objectively—interference with hearing and speech. Federal regulations say that if a new or expanded road will produce noise approaching sixty-seven decibels (generally measured outdoors, near buildings), the state must try to bring about a "substantial" reduction in the sound level. Sixty-seven decibels is sound so loud that people have to be within three to five feet of each other to hold a conversation without raising their voices.

The human ear usually cannot detect a change of three decibels or less, so transportation departments aim for improvements great enough to be easily noticed by the average person—often eight to ten decibels. A ten-decibel reduction amounts to a 50 percent cut in loudness.

Researchers for the federal Environmental Protection Agency have found that 20 percent of the population is "highly annoyed" if the sound level measures fifty-five decibels. This level, as it happens, is common outdoors in urban neighborhoods well away from major highways, and is one that transportation departments would often be glad to find in neighborhoods bordering expressways.

Attempts to provide relief from noise are complicated by the fact that walls work best at blocking short sound waves—high-pitched sounds. Low-frequency sounds, such as the deep rumble of heavy trucks, may actually become more noticeable once the higher-frequency noise has been sharply reduced. "After a noise barrier has been installed,"

Illustration by Gretchen Dow Simpson

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" . . . *well*, I've been enjoying a conversation with Cynthia Ozick, debating Peter Edelman on 'The Worst Thing Bill Clinton Has Done'—oh, and Robert Pinsky read me a poem last night."

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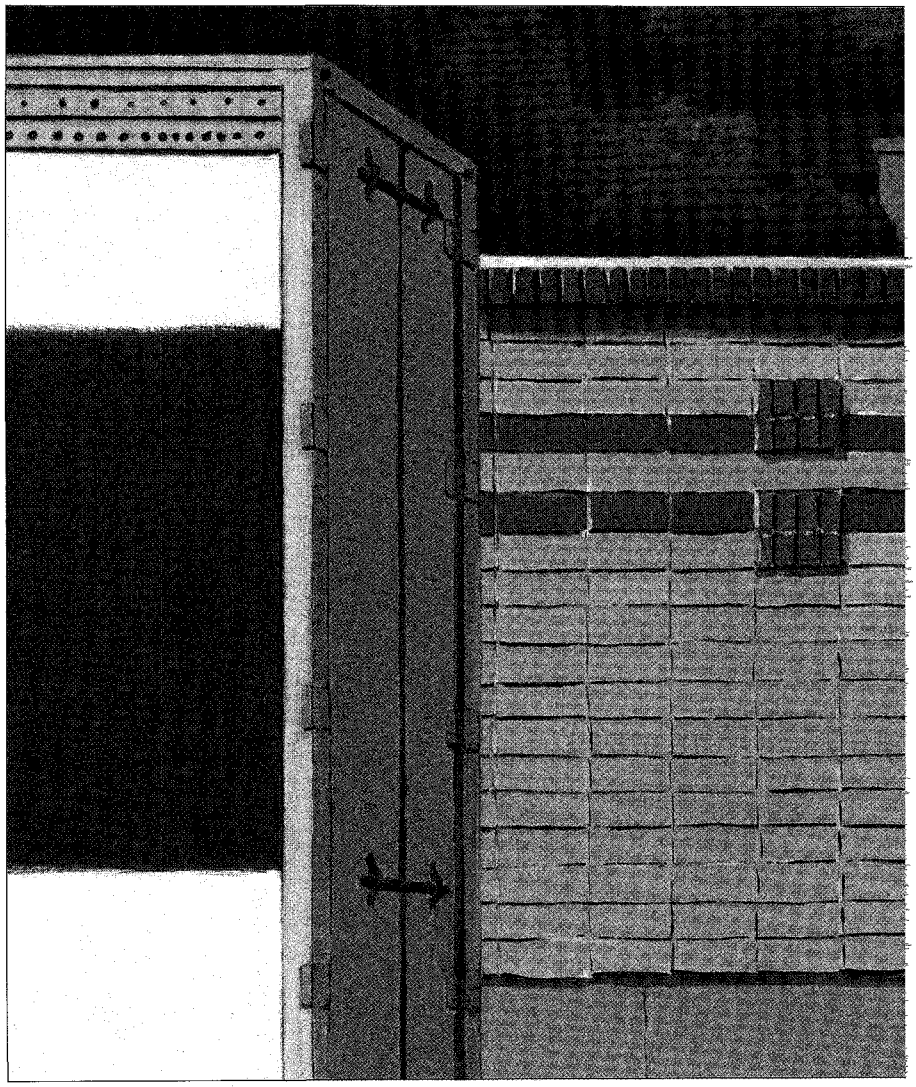
says Robert E. Armstrong, a senior highway-noise specialist for the Federal Highway Administration, "some people complain that they now hear every truck that goes by."

To a limited extent designers of noise barriers take psychology into account. California determines heights for its noise barriers partly by calculating how high they must be to hide the sight of tractor-trailer exhaust stacks. "If there were no trucks on the road, the walls could be considerably lower," says Walter Whitnack, an engineer formerly with the California Department of Transportation. "When people can't see the source of the sound, they tend not to be as bothered by it."

I've wondered whether highway engineers compete to see who can build the bluntest, most macho wall.



Highway engineers can seldom rely on trees and shrubs to buffer noise. A band of vegetation thick enough so that people could not see through it would provide much the same psychological relief as a solid wall, and most travelers would rather look at trees and bushes than at concrete. But an expanse of vegetation such as evergreen trees with dense undergrowth would have to be a hundred feet deep to reduce the sound level by five decibels, according to William Bowlby, a traffic-noise expert at Vanderbilt University. In most instances the expanse would have to be even deeper. "You almost never can find *existing* vegetation along a highway that could give you a significant sound reduction in a hundred feet," Armstrong says. "If we planted the right type of trees and ground cover—at considerable expense—it would take five to ten years for it to produce a five-decibel reduction."

An alternative sometimes chosen by highway builders is to create a natural barrier by mounding up earth and planting grass or other vegetation on it. A planted earth berm seven or eight feet high can be as acoustically effective as a ten-foot-high wall. If the berm alone cannot provide all the sound reduction desired, a wall can be built atop it, and will look considerably less obtrusive than a ground-level wall.

THE most common solution is walls, and nothing more than walls. In traveling around the country I've sometimes wondered whether highway engineers were competing to see who could build the wall with the bluntest, most macho appearance. Erie, Pennsylvania, has massive, zigzagging walls of concrete that look as if they were designed for military defense; all that is missing is an emplacement of howitzers behind them. Along I-95 in Virginia are metal panels painted in alternating colors, inherently out of harmony with the landscape. In southern California walls have been mounted on highway overpasses, creating tight, viewless corridors. In Westchester County, New York, lengths of highway are lined with squalid walls of pre-cast concrete, every panel spray-painted by vandals. Along I-95 in Connecticut are startlingly crude walls of wood supported by lopped-off wooden posts that jab at the sky. An official of a neighboring state calls these the "Fort Apache design."

Noise barriers typically reach a height of twelve feet above the road, though in the Northeast they often rise sixteen to twenty feet, and in Minnesota, which has been especially anxious to reduce highway noise, they climb as high as thirty feet. Among the tallest noise-barrier walls in the nation is a thirty-nine-foot-high, 2,000-foot-long concrete behemoth in Vienna, Virginia, built so that performers can give concerts in the open-air amphitheater of Wolf Trap Farm Park while traffic whizzes past on the Dulles Toll Road, 380 feet away.

The harsh appearance of the walls is

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sometimes compounded by other elements, such as "Jersey barriers"—short walls with sloped bases to bounce straying vehicles back toward the traffic lanes. The longest bridge in the Florida Keys, spanning seven miles of brilliant blue-green water, is one of America's many bridges hemmed in by Jersey barriers so massive that a spectacular panorama is half hidden behind concrete.

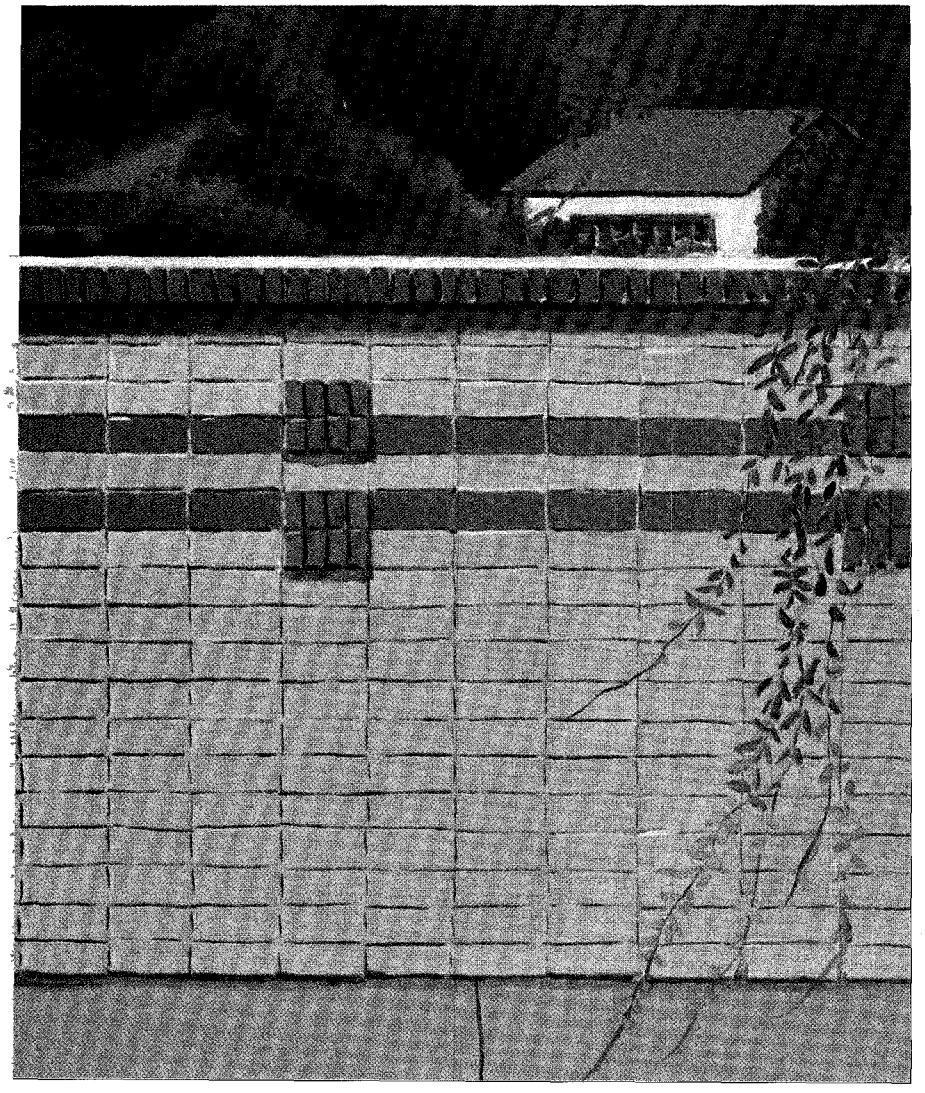
Transportation officials claim that in recent years they have increased their attention to roadside aesthetics. Years ago engineers often naively installed concrete with a smooth surface—easy for anyone with a can of paint to turn into a message board. In residential areas some transportation departments erected metal walls that, they now admit, have a grimly industrial look. Elsewhere appeared economical wooden walls that soon warped and lost their effectiveness.

Some neighborhoods complained about the unattractiveness of the initial noise barriers, so most transportation departments now consult the communities for which barriers are proposed. Today, if Pennsylvania wants to build a wall of pre-cast concrete, groups of neighbors get to choose the color and texture of the side that will be visible from their yards. With a mold known as a form liner, wet concrete can be cast to take on the look of wood or stone or to incorporate shapes such as silhouettes of trees.

Some states have switched from smooth gray concrete to concrete with a rough-textured ribbed surface or an aggregate (pebbly) surface, for a richer appearance that is harder to deface. A number have decided to pay an extra dollar or two a square foot to coat walls with an anti-graffiti compound. (Noise barriers cost an average of a million dollars a mile, and elaborate ones cost considerably more.)

The effort to please people living close by has made some highways uglier for motorists. Virginia allowed neighborhoods in Fairfax County to select so many different kinds of barriers and retaining walls along I-66 that the road, despite skillful planting, "looks like a showroom of barrier technology" in the opinion of William Rieley, a Charlottesville landscape architect who teaches road design at the University of Virginia. The potential to shape the road into a visually coherent experience was lost in the politics of overcoming community opposition.

The aesthetic progress of highway departments has been agonizingly slow. The Florida Department of Transportation, for example, expresses pride at having molded the city of Hollywood's seal into local sound walls on I-95 and at having let community groups elsewhere select decorations for stretches of that densely traveled road. But there has been little coordination of the road's growing accumulation of concrete silhouettes: municipal logos, lighthouses, laughing gulls, snowy egrets, pelicans, flamingos, and sailboats. Moreover, a symbol like Hollywood's municipal seal, as it was rendered, is out of proportion to the wall—neither big nor bold enough to make much impact on a surface stretching 2,000 feet long and as much as eighteen feet high.



Upgrading the aesthetic character of a highway does not necessarily push costs to outrageous levels.

NOT all sound walls are aesthetic disasters. Michigan has built good-looking walls of red brick trimmed with concrete beside I-696 outside Detroit. California has built sound barriers topped by a continuous line of masonry caps with a continuous recess running just beneath the caps. The unbroken horizontal lines lead the eye smoothly forward. I-680 in Walnut Creek, California, has sound walls made of blocks in a combination of colors, textures, and

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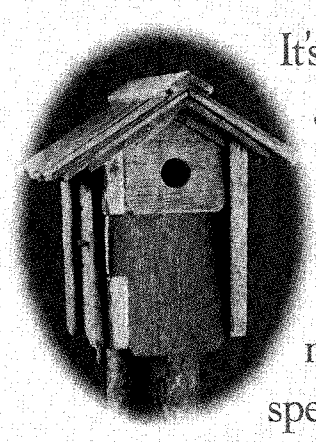

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sizes. The walls start uniformly dark gray at either end and progress to a lighter tone of gray interspersed at random with dark-reddish blocks; then the reddish blocks form two horizontal bands. The pattern changes from one end to the other, giving rhythm to the drive.

Upgrading the character of a highway does not necessarily push costs to outrageous levels. "Because of all the gray block, these walls were less expensive than the usual earth-tone walls we build," Arthur Yee, of the California Department of Transportation, says of Walnut Creek's patterned walls.

One of the most ambitious efforts to improve the character of roads is a public-arts program that has been operating in Phoenix since 1987. Under the guidance of the Phoenix Arts Commission, the city planning department, and the street-transportation department, artists

Desert flowers in Arizona or lush green growth in the East exert a tremendous effect on travelers.

have been hired to design new sound walls and improve existing ones, retaining walls, bridges, and overpasses. For example, Marilyn Zwak, of Cochise, Arizona, and two assistants applied 150 tons of adobe to the Thomas Road overpass on Phoenix's Squaw Peak Parkway, shaping the twenty-four-foot-high support columns into evocative profiles inspired by Hohokam Indian zoological forms. On the retaining walls of the overpass Zwak installed thirty-four relief panels based on human, animal, and abstract images found on Hohokam artifacts. Then she invited neighborhood residents to imprint into the adobe their own designs or objects, ranging from tools to clothing remnants to the key to one of the houses that was demolished to make way for the freeway. Completed in 1990, the overpass has since been voted Phoenix's most popular work of public art.

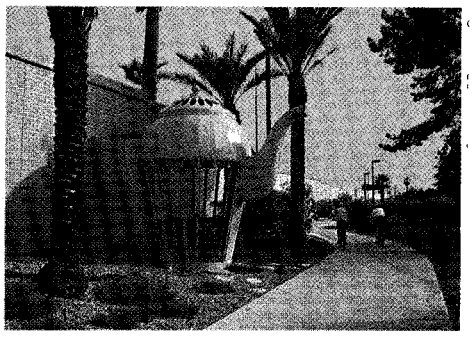
On another stretch of the same highway the artist Mags Harries, with Harries/Heder Collaborative, of Cambridge, Massachusetts, and the Planning Center, of Phoenix, installed thirty-five whimsical sculptural pieces of cast concrete and steel that were finished in paint, tile, metallic leaf, and other graffiti-resistant polychrome materials. Among them were giant teapots, bowls, vases, and pots, the biggest of them fifteen feet tall, placed mainly on the residential side of the noise barriers. Here, it was hoped, the artworks would make the six-lane road and its ten miles of beige concrete barrier more acceptable to neighborhoods that had regarded the road as a monstrous imposition. After the installation, in 1992, motorists noticed tops of pots and handles and spouts of oversized teapots rising above the sound walls. The seeming frivolity of the project, together with its cost of $474,000 at a time when Phoenix was suffering a recession, at first aroused public condemnation, but now it is well liked.

One lesson of the Phoenix experience, says James Matteson, the city's director of street transportation, is that artists and designers should be invited to work with highway engineers while a road is being designed, rather than being asked to relieve existing highway structures of their starkness. He points out that Zwak was asked to collaborate with the engineering team for the Thomas Road overpass from the very beginning—a principal reason the project achieved such wide appreciation and yet cost *less* than the plain overpass the engineers would have produced.

Another lesson, says Deborah Whitehurst, the founding director of the Phoenix Arts Commission and currently a consultant on public art, is that "the wall is not the problem: it's what we put in front of the wall that's critical." She now favors generous plantings to make man-made sound barriers recede into the background. Living matter—whether saguaro cactuses and desert flowers in Arizona or lush green growth in the East—exerts a tremendous effect on travelers, as evidenced by the continuing pleasure people derive from the country's surviving if antiquated pre–Second World War parkways.

William Rieley, in Charlottesville, advocates such relatively simple steps as planting Boston ivy where it will cover sound walls. Along a portion of I-476, or the "Blue Route," in the western suburbs of Philadelphia, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation has built concrete walls in which pockets allow vines, shrubs, or ground cover to take root.

The stumbling block is that transportation departments, even where they have room for deluxe landscaping, usually either resist spending enough money to create it or neglect its maintenance. A saying popular with transportation analysts goes, "There are no ribbon-cuttings for maintenance."



From top: the "Blue Route," near Philadelphia; Squaw Peak Parkway, near Phoenix; I-680, in the Bay Area

Edward Beimborn, the co-author with Julie Farnham of noise-barrier-design guidelines published by the National Academy of Sciences' Transportation Research Board, says that northern Europe treats sound walls more skillfully than the United States does. Though Europe has less room for highway landscaping, European noise barriers more

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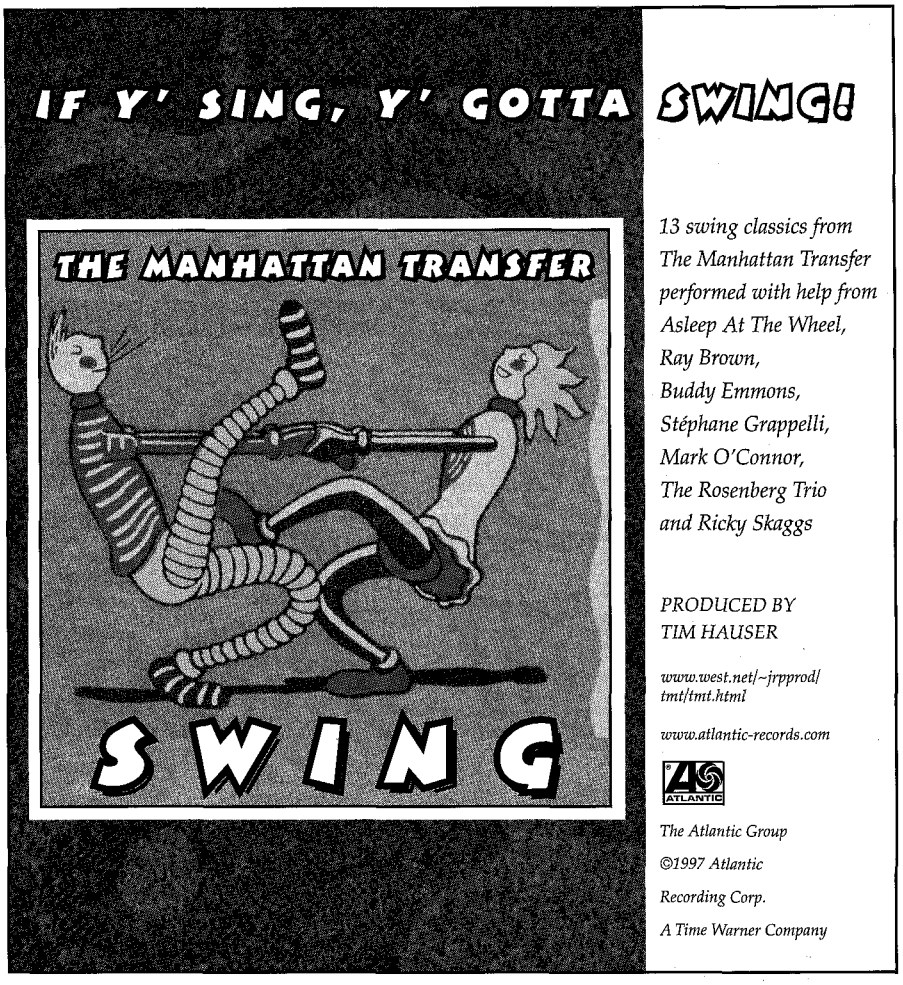
frequently take into account people's desire for an enjoyable experience, including views of the areas being traversed. In the Netherlands, Beimborn says, a sound wall may be built to shield a town from noise, but at certain intervals the opaque surface will incorporate stripes of glass or transparent plastic, "just enough so you can see the town." The see-through sections are in stripes, he says, to prevent birds from smashing into them.

Rieley argues that cities fare best when highways are "suppressed"—sunk into the ground. This cuts noise dissemination, reduces or eliminates the need for freestanding walls, and makes it possible for the city to be knit back together. "The caveat," he says, "is that it is expensive. It involves earth-moving."

Can state and federal governments afford to spend more on highway design and maintenance? Perhaps a better question is whether they can afford not to. In some states, Virginia among them, tourism is a leading industry; highway improvements that make traveling more appealing stand a good chance of bolstering the economy. In Radnor, Pennsylvania, where $3 million was spent on corridor beautification for U.S. 30 and I-476, the stockbroker who chaired the township's design-review commission calculated that the beautification effort helped property values to rise, rather than be depressed, by the new interstate.

Ugly or unwelcome highways dampen people's enthusiasm and hasten the deterioration of adjacent neighborhoods. William Morrish, the director of the Design Center for American Urban Landscape, at the University of Minnesota, cites as an example of a decision that adds value to an area the construction in St. Paul in the mid-1980s of a 45-mph, truck-free, well-landscaped thoroughfare for I-35 East instead of a standard expressway. "It costs more than a standard highway," he says, "but it's going to be cheaper than bailing out a failing neighborhood."

Transportation departments need to see their task as both enriching motorists' experiences and enhancing neighborhoods' well-being in addition to simply providing for traffic movement. Only when transportation planners take a more balanced approach will Americans' time on the road become decidedly more enjoyable.



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Napoli Ever After

As always, Naples is Italy's most vibrant city—and now it's clean and safe

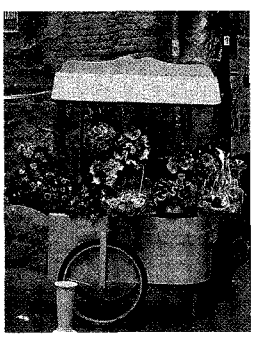
by Corby Kummer

"I'D love to go to Italy too," a desk-bound friend in Milan remarked jokingly when I told him about my recent trip to Naples. For Italians as well as Italophiles, Naples is today the must-visit city—the place where the arts are in the fullest flower, the food is exhilarating, and life pulsates. Like Barcelona in the eighties, Naples is taken with itself in a way that makes visiting it more exciting than it has been in decades—maybe centuries.

Until very recently, saying that Naples was your favorite city and urging friends to visit was almost foolhardy. The churches and museums were among the finest in Italy, yes, but just try to see them. Guidebooks directed you down dark, menacing alleys to marvelous churches that turned out to be bolted shut. The city's star museum of art, Capodimonte, in a vast royal palace built by the Spanish Bourbons, who made Naples a capital rivaled only by Paris, was simply closed for years. Walking around Spaccanapoli, the quarter with most of the great churches and noble palaces, was so dangerous that you were warned to leave everything of value at your hotel before setting out.

The city has transformed itself with startling speed. Its modern rebirth began in 1984, when a group of citizens calling itself Napoli '99 took the destruction caused by a 1980 earthquake (and the subsequent pilfering of government funds earmarked for rebuilding) as the impetus for collecting private support to restore monuments and museums. Sculptures, portals, and palace façades emerged, cleansed, from scaffolding; whole museums were refurbished, and churches that had been closed for years reopened. During the G7 summit of 1994 the world saw that Naples could be clean and safe, and the main arteries passable rather than clogged.

Cynics accustomed to grime and chaos called it a modern Potemkin village. Rather, it was a preview of the plans of the city's newly elected left-wing mayor, Antonio Bassolino, who vowed to make Naples "livable" after years of civic neglect, corruption, and abandonment to the effective control of the Camorra, the Neapolitan version of the Mafia. Within months of his election, in December of 1993, Bassolino put traffic cops and patrolmen back on the beat (traffic policemen considered their jobs so hopeless that many would clock in and then go home) and set about cleaning up the city. Since then theft has decreased by 25 percent (it has not, of course, vanished) and tourism has increased by 40 percent. In the spring of last year it took me



Above, Piazza del Plebiscito, the city's heart, newly traffic-free

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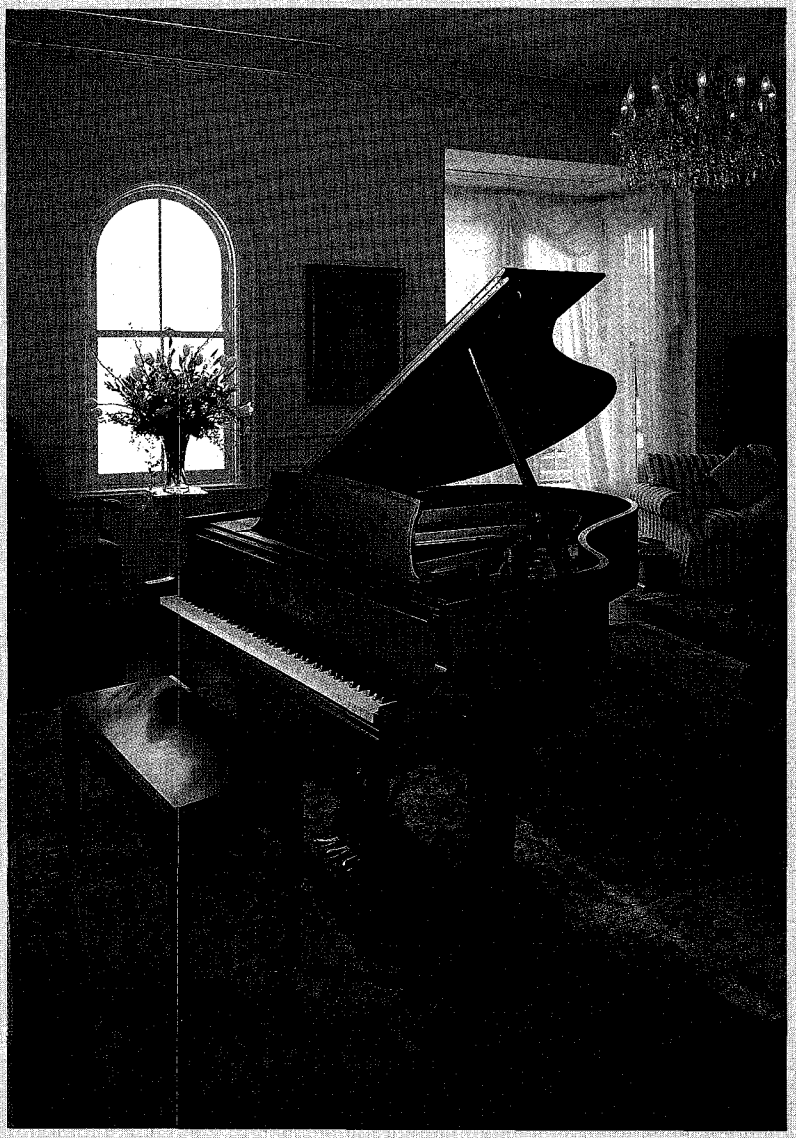
AS WELL AS HEARD.



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nearly an hour in a taxi to get from downtown to Capodimonte, which had just reopened to international fanfare. Last April, after the busiest portion of the city's main north-south route had been made one-way, the trip took less than twenty minutes.

Piazza del Plebiscito, the city's main piazza, previously a chaotic welter of vehicles, has been shut to traffic altogether and paved with new black cobblestones, and now it is among the country's grandest spaces. Grouped around the piazza are Teatro San Carlo, Italy's largest opera house, which some critics say lately surpasses Milan's La Scala; a vast royal palace, where you can inspect grandiose mid-nineteenth-century royal suites built by the Bourbons, reminiscent of the ones in Buckingham Palace; an 1887 shopping gallery more ornate than Milan's famous Galleria, restored by Napoli '99 to its gilt, stucco, and cast-iron splendor and now home to shops that display the city's internationally famous tailoring; Caffe Gambrinus, where seemingly half of Naples gathers twice a day for coffee, served in beautifully refurbished neoclassical salons; and, across from the palace, a sweeping semicircular colonnade to rival the one at St. Peter's. Once at 1:00 A.M. last spring I counted seven wedding parties posing for pictures.

And have I mentioned the city's food? It made me swoon.

TWO neighborhoods—Spaccanapoli, at the heart of the city, and Vomero, in the hills above—kept drawing me back to their streets, old and narrow and cramped in the first case, modern and wide and airy in the second. Spaccanapoli reflects the classic image of wily denizens living amid decaying glory. Vomero is an unexpectedly calm, prosperous neighborhood where in a small area you can find a selection of the city's best museums, shopping, and cafés.

It's easy to think of Spaccanapoli as the set for a melodrama, with Sophia Loren gesticulating out some back window, or for a postwar comedy starring Totò, the aristocrat whose rubber face immortalized the Neapolitan who knows how to "arrange himself," or sidestep every obstacle. The laundry flapping on balconies and old women hawking contraband cigarettes are picturesque reminders of a time when Naples lived entirely on the streets—a time as recent as the late forties and the fifties, memorably described in *Naples '44*, by Norman Lewis, and *The Gallery*, by John Horne Burns.

The main entrance to the neighborhood is Piazza del Gesù Nuovo, which has what are considered the city's two finest churches—Gesù Nuovo, named for the Jesuits who fitted it with richly hued frescoes and marble-inlaid floors, and Santa Chiara, which dates from the time of the Angevin domination, in the fourteenth century. I much prefer the vaulting Provençal Gothic simplicity of Santa Chiara, which was bombed and then almost entirely rebuilt after the war. Ian Thomson writes in his useful and entertaining guide in the Harper Independent Traveller series that its vast single-aisle interior "has been compared variously to a large banqueting hall, a ballroom and an indoor car-park." On two separate visits I've seen society weddings there; the well-turned-out local aristocracy did make the church seem like a ballroom, if a somber one, and so did the white-gloved footmen passing paper cones of sugar-coated almonds, called confetti.

Most tourists skip the church and head around back to the big, verdant cloister, covered with blue-and-mustard-colored handpainted majolica tiles from the eighteenth century. In an unmarked room to the right of the entrance you can see one of the densely populated crèches, or *presepi*, with the figures dressed like dolls in period costume, for which Naples is famous. The crèche beside the cloister has only 170 shepherds, but it will suffice if you can't get to San Martino, in Vomero, where crèches have hundreds of figures.

The segment of Spaccanapoli between Piazza del Gesù Nuovo and Piazza San Domenico is now tranquil enough to al-

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Galleria Umberto I, restored to its gilt-and-stucco splendor

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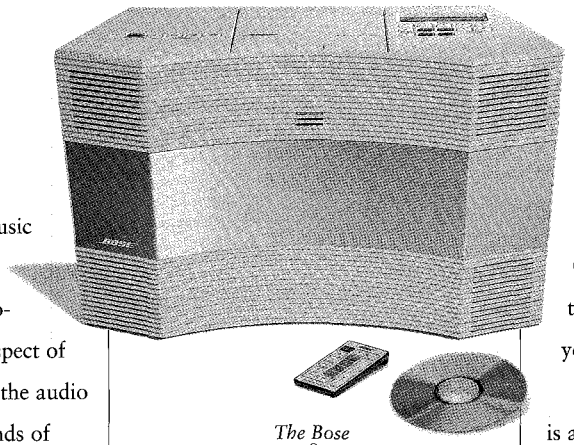
LESS THAN A FOOT TALL, YET LOOKED UP TO BY SO MANY.



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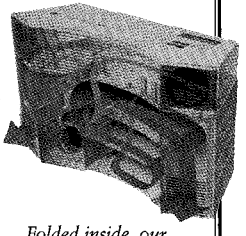

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low you to keep an eye on the Baroque palaces instead of on your wallet. In the courtyard of one palace is Simposium (at via Benedetto Croce 38), the headquarters of a winning young group dedicated to the city's historical cuisine. On most weekends the group, founded by Giovanni Serritelli, a food historian, and Barbara Alfano, his wife, stages dinners themed to different eras in the city's history, with accompanying musical or theatrical performances. At the dinner I looked in on, waiters were dressed as eighteenth-century courtiers and a better-than-competent troupe from the local conservatory performed excerpts from *Don Giovanni*. I very much liked a kind of pie filled with cooked greens and ricotta, called ravioli—but not the kind we think of. Serritelli, dressed in tails, told the diners sitting at the long antique refectory table that in the eighteenth century pasta appeared chiefly in soups, and was in any case thought to be fit only for the poor. (Alfano will translate into English her husband's comments; for the schedule of dinners call 011-39-81-551-8510.) During the day Simposium sells handmade honeys, jams, pasta, wine, and limoncello, the region's lemon liqueur.

Piazza San Domenico, a square of imposing private palaces, is returning to its historic role as a salon, now that cars and scooters, notorious for carrying drive-by purse snatchers, have been banned there. Just beyond the piazza is via San Gregorio Armeno, a narrow street that offers the classic Spaccanapoli view: a fuchsia-painted stucco Baroque church tower, laundry strung between the buildings on either side, and shops selling clay and wood crèche figures, including tiny loaves of bread and baskets of olives and bunches of grapes. You'll also find carved figures of modern heroes such as Totò and Mayor Bassolino, crowned by a halo.

On the way out of Spaccanapoli is the quintessential Naples pizzeria: Da Michele, at via Cesare Sersale 1-3. Be prepared to wait in line at any hour for a seat at a communal marble table. This will give you a chance to watch the frenzied activity at the back. The chief *pizzaiolo*, Luigi Condurro, seventy-five years old and one of three grandsons of the founder who operate the restaurant, oversees the making of hundreds of pizzas every day. The dough is stretched onto wooden peels and thrust with a decisive jerk into the tiled beehive wood-burning oven, from which it emerges just ninety seconds later. Two humorous poems in Neapolitan dialect, posted in large script on the walls, explain the house policy of making two pizzas only—one with tomatoes, basil, and mozzarella, the other with marinara sauce, anchovies, and grated pecorino. It's possible that you'll find better pizza elsewhere; it's not possible that you'll be a fuller participant in the theater that is Naples.

The two main tourist sites, the archaeological museum and Capodimonte, require several hours each (not, needless to say, on the same day). Near the archaeological museum, on the edge of Spaccanapoli, is the refreshingly green and relaxed Piazza Bellini, a nexus of antiques dealers and the city's flourishing booksellers—Naples is one of Italy's great bibliophile centers. Bookstalls like the ones along Paris's Left Bank, selling both new and used books, line the streets on and leading from the square. I kept drifting back to one of the piazza's literary cafés, and not just for the arty atmosphere: in my manifold samplings of cannoli and the city's best-known pastry, the shell-shaped sfogliatelle, the best and most crackling I found were at the Caffe dell'Epoca, a "tea room" just off the piazza at via Constantinopoli 81-2.

Uniquely, the city's cafés insist on using an old kind of espresso machine, whose long hydraulic levers slowly bob up and down in a kind of coffee ballet behind steaming trays of cups kept submerged in boiling water. Any of the city's Mexico coffee shops, with their charmingly antiquated system of tickets in a different color for each drink, will supply excellent espresso from Passalacqua, one of Italy's increasingly rare regional roasters. I can't imagine being indifferent to a city that is a capital of both pastry and coffee.

WHENEVER the pace in the city center becomes trying, board one of the clean, recently rebuilt funiculars from the center up to Vomero—a city within a city, and an exceptionally civilized one. A lovely morning could begin with a stroll through the gardens of the neoclassical Villa Floridiana, a mansion that now contains a ceramics museum. Its collections consist of rare early porcelain from factories all over Europe and many pieces from Capodimonte, the royal porcelain factory established in Naples in the mid eighteenth century (named for but not part of the palace). Another place to begin is the whitewashed Baroque charter-

Below, a downtown market street; below right, Santa Chiara

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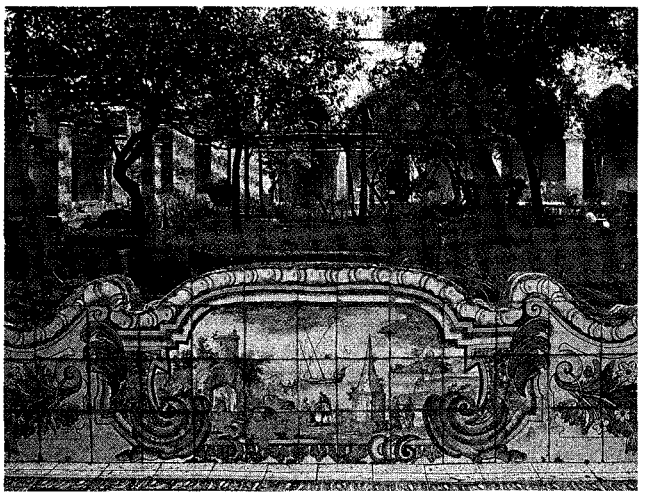

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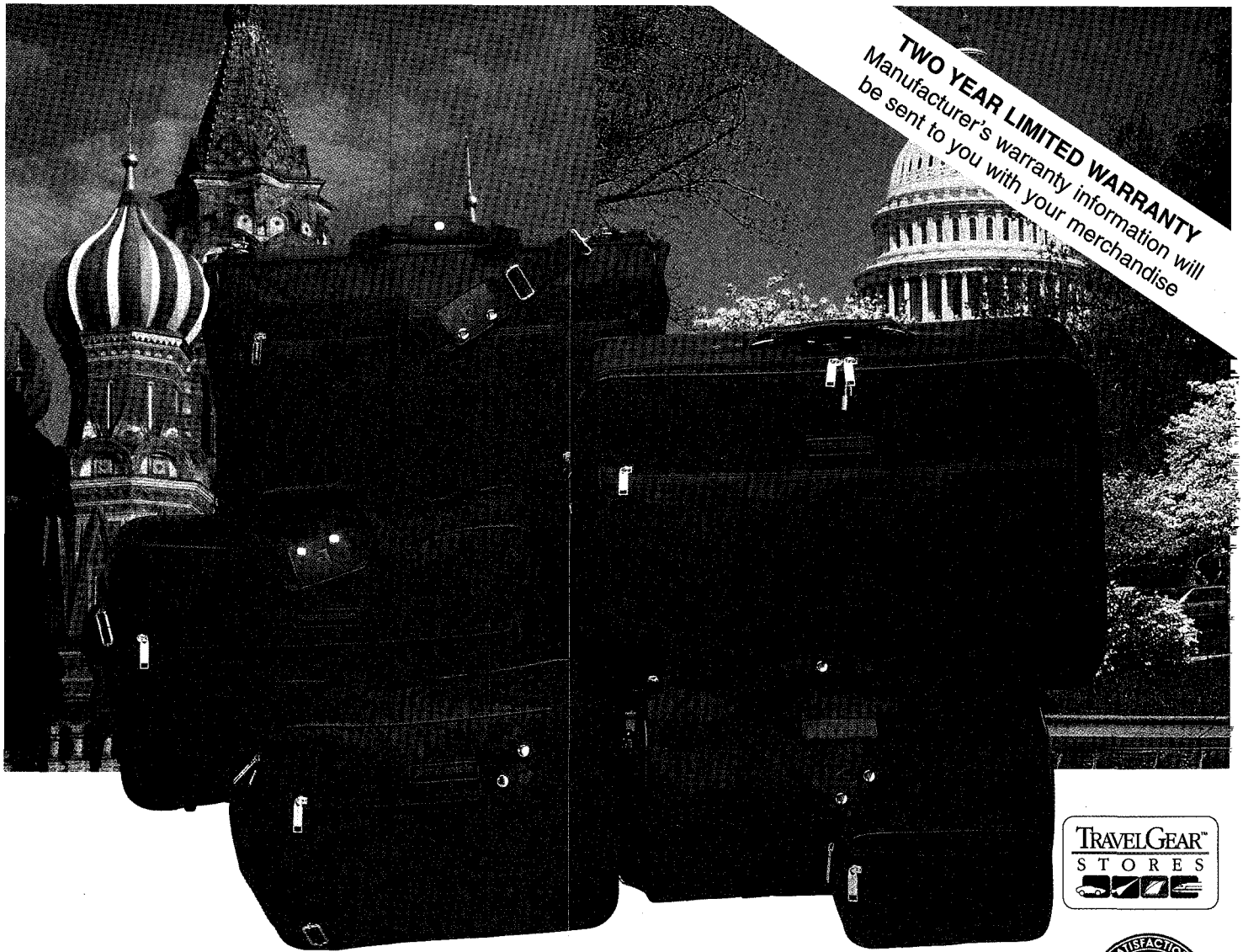

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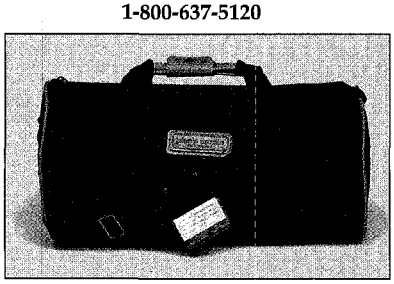

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house of San Martino, recently and handsomely restored. The original monastery rooms, which house Baroque and Rococo furniture and paintings, are cool and tranquil, and former stables house the *pièces de rèsistance*: soaring, marvelously detailed crèches that make the famous one at the Metropolitan Museum of Art look mundane.

The worldly center of Vomero is the shop-lined modern streets around Piazza Vanvitelli, named for the architect who devised the city's neoclassical style in the eighteenth century. For detailed information on the marvelous cafés, ice-cream shops, and restaurants I relied on Fred Plotkin's *Italy for the Gourmet Traveler* (1996). I also found several exceptional places on my own: Café do Brasil, at via Luca Giordano 31, where liveried baristas work behind the espresso machines, on a raised platform at the back of the small café, like master organists; Mario Daniele (via Scarlatti 102-6), an elegant take-out and pastry shop whose uniformed waiters take similar pride in their craft and whose cassata has a fantastically silky ricotta filling and a soft, fresh coating of hand-rolled marzipan; and the Osteria Donna Teresa, at via Kerbaker 58, a small tiled restaurant with bare tables which looks like a miniature school cafeteria but is worth seeking out for whatever Anna Sorvino has made that day in the open kitchen in the back.

Via Kerbaker, which leads to the station from which Vomero's main funicular runs down to the center of Naples, offers a concentration of intensely pleasurable food. Across from the osteria, at number 43, Ciro Otranto uses only fresh ingredients to produce the best ice cream I had in Naples, a good ice-cream town. At the end of the street the tiny Friggitoria Vomero (via Cimarosa 44) turns out the best fritters I've had anywhere. Commuters arriving home on the funicular reward themselves with brown-paper cones full of fritters made of eggplant or cauliflower or boiled wild greens or rectangles of polenta, all of them sprinkled with coarse local sea salt. Just thinking about Vomero makes me want to buy a plane ticket.

If only Naples were as well furnished with hotels as with cafés and restaurants. Most hotels are along the waterfront, and the current leader is the Vesuvio, a business hotel where Franco Milano, the concierge, can get opera tickets at a moment's notice. Double rooms there start at $280 a night (information about this and other Naples hotels is available from the Italian tourist-information office at 630 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10111 or by fax at 212-586-9249). A medium-priced alternative is to stay not in the city but in Sorrento, a clean, peaceful town at the end of the picturesquely named Circumvesuviana, a commuter railway that stops at the ruins of Herculaneum and Pompeii. The forty-five-minute trip is easy, and I like Sorrento for the sense that it has a life apart from the tourism that funds the entire Amalfi coast, below Naples. (I love the ice cream made of local walnuts at Gelateria Davide, across from the station.)

The Vesuvio and its fellow hotels border Chiaia, the city's high-rent neighborhood. On via Chiaia, the Madison Avenue of Naples, you can examine the shirts and suits that are admired throughout the country; Rubinacci and Eddy Monetti (on the street's continuation, via dei Mille) are two of the best-known stores. Marinella, a small shop on the Riviera di Chiaia, a boulevard facing a long waterfront park, is famous for its profusion of ties produced in editions of a half dozen or so, so that you are unlikely to run into someone wearing the same one. After I bought a tie (for about $65) and started to put it on, I was given a spontaneous lesson in tie-tying. It began when one of the suave clerks reached across the counter to give me some pointers, and ended in front of a three-way mirror, with all the staff members critiquing their colleague until he got the knot exactly right.

Just off the via Chiaia is the Pizzeria Brandi, a few steps from Piazza del Plebiscito, which claims to have invented the pizza Margherita (tomato, basil, and mozzarella—the colors of the Italian flag) to honor an 1889 visit by Queen Margherita of Savoy. Given the banners and brochures with which the restaurant advertises itself, I expected the pizza to be banal, but found to my surprise that it compared favorably with that from Ciro a Santa Brigida, a businessmen's restaurant with friendly, humorous waiters, which produces what Fred Plotkin calls the "gold standard" of pizza.

On the riverfront boulevard, at No. 34, is the Naples restaurant I liked most: La Cantina di Triunfo, open for dinner only. Tina Nicodemo cooks two first courses (pasta with ham and fresh peas or with octopus the night I visited) and two main courses a night following traditional Neapolitan recipes and using produce from her own city garden or places she knows (the peas had been picked that afternoon). Her husband, Carmine, runs the excellent wine shop at the front of the premises by day and produces the equally excellent desserts by night.

Triunfo is where I'd go for a dinner of any import; but when looking for a bite after the opera I was very happy I followed the crowds to Da Ettore, a medium-priced pizzeria and trattoria near the luxury hotels, at via Santa Lucia 56. Neapolitans of all classes throng the restaurant for its variation on pizza, the sandwichlike pagnottiello: untopped pizzas are baked and split open like pita bread, filled with mozzarella and lettuce and ham, for instance, cut into quarters, and served, still warm, wrapped in paper napkins. Bucatini al dente, grilled slices of scamorza, and nearly every other dish pack the punch of fresh tomatoes—the region around Naples grows the country's best—and garlic and hot red-pepper flakes.

I'll end with one more reason for adding Naples to the usual Rome-Florence-Venice culture circuit: a church officially named Sant'Anna dei Lombardi but commonly called Monteoliveto, for the square on which it sits, near Spaccanapoli, in the modern part of downtown (and near the startlingly modern Bauhaus-style central post office, built in 1933–1936). Guidebooks give the church cursory mention, saying it's a sort of museum of the Florentine Renaissance; guides lead visitors to it as an afterthought. Some museum! If this church, recently restored and reopened, were in Florence, you'd have to jostle other tourists for a good look at the sculpted altars of immense refinement; or the sacristy frescoed by Vasari, with trompe l'oeil marquetry panels along the walls as eye-popping as the famous ones in the ducal palace of Urbino; or, especially, the stupendous life-size group of terra-cotta figures around the dead Jesus, a work from 1492 by the Modena-born Guido Mazzoni. In Naples, Monteoliveto is just one more masterpiece cleaned and put back on show.

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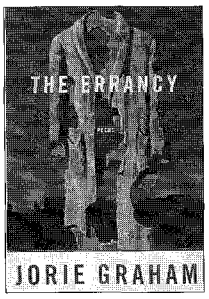
What's left to explore?



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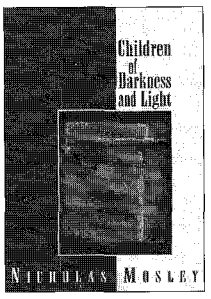

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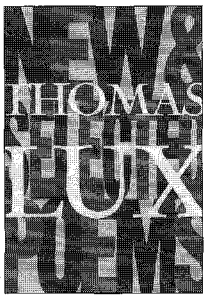

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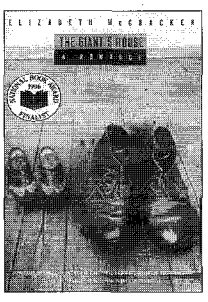

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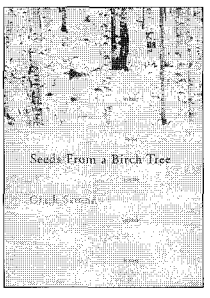

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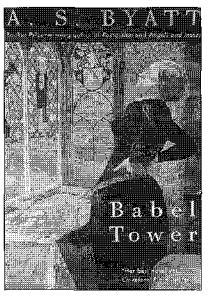

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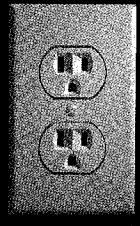

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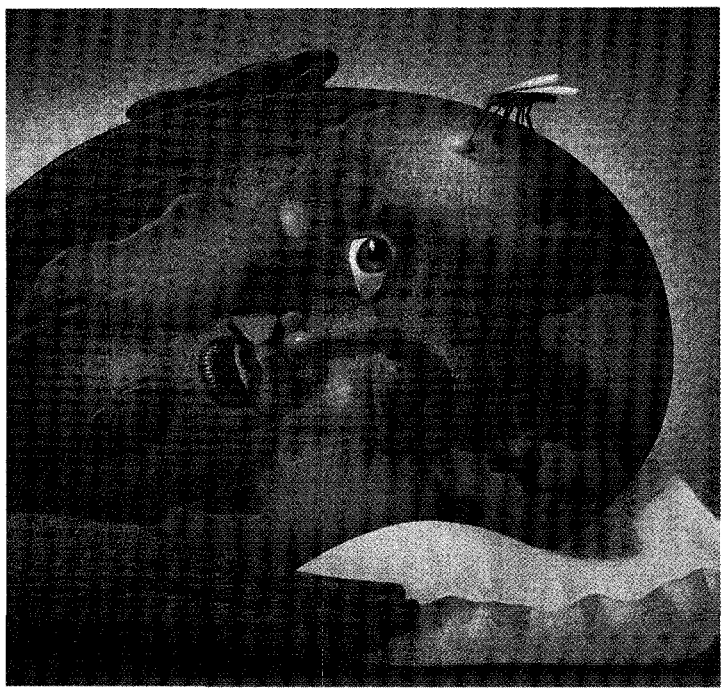
RESURGENCE OF A DEADLY DISEASE

by ELLEN RUPPEL SHELL

DEPENDING on one's perspective, the struggle to gain dominion over malaria can be seen either as a primer of the possible in infectious-disease control or as classic tragedy. All but obliterated in the developed world half a century ago, and suppressed in the Third World in the 1950s and 1960s, malaria has since returned in full force to North Africa, India, Southeast Asia, China, South America, and the Caribbean. Worldwide incidence of the disease has quadrupled in the past five years, and resistance to available drugs for prevention and treatment is growing rapidly. Nearly 40 percent of the world's population lives in regions where malaria is endemic, and millions more live in areas that are encountering the disease for the first time in decades. Europe has had outbreaks, and in the United States 1,000 to 1,200 cases annually have been reported in recent years. But the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that cases reported in the United States represent only about half the actual incidence. Every year approximately seven million American tourists and business people spend time in regions where malaria is endemic, as do military personnel and foreign visitors to the United States, and it is likely that thousands arrive here with malaria parasites in their bodies. As a consequence, locally transmitted malaria, absent from the United States for roughly thirty years, has returned. Since 1988 locally transmitted malaria has appeared in California, Texas, Michigan, Florida, New Jersey, and New York City. *Anopheles* mosquitoes—members of the genus that carries malaria parasites—are common almost everywhere in the United States and, for that matter, in most populated regions of the world.

Malaria kills roughly twice as many people worldwide as AIDS, drugs no longer work against some strains, and mosquitoes in diverse parts of the United States now carry the disease. Why aren't we doing more to fight it?



Nonetheless, the United States has shown little interest in the problem. Malaria is transferable in blood, yet it is not screened for in the American blood supply. The country's *Anopheles* mosquito population has gone

Illustrations by Theo Rudnak

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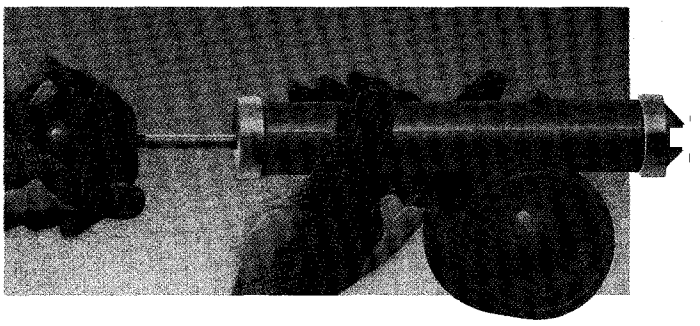
unmonitored for more than fifty years. "We just don't know the potential for transmission," says John Beier, a professor of tropical medicine at Tulane University. Temperature and humidity may well be among the most important factors in the rate of spread of the disease, yet we have only a vague notion of what effect, if any, climate change will have on malaria transmission—if, for example, global warming can be expected to bring malaria and other mosquito-borne diseases north from Mexico. Most Americans seem to think the disease has been eradicated or, at worst, is confined to the tropics. In fact there are few places on earth that cannot sustain a malaria epidemic.

Dyann Wirth, a professor of tropical medicine at the Harvard School of Public Health, insists that Americans must stop thinking of malaria as purely a Third World disorder. "The official CDC line is that widespread malaria in the United States is unlikely," she told me recently. "But we could have mini-epidemics, established pockets of disease that would be very expensive to control." Vector-borne diseases—diseases that are transmitted by way of a third organism, such as the mosquito—have a much higher reproductive rate than other diseases and pass through a population much more quickly. "Each case of AIDS," Wirth says, "passes along, on average, two to ten additional cases of AIDS. A case of malaria can result in as many as a hundred more cases of malaria. So the multiplier effect is quite substantial." And in this era of tight government budgets there is ample reason to worry that erosion of our public-health infrastructure and the denial of affordable health care to recent immigrants and the poor will encourage the spread of malaria in the United States.

Last year Vice President Albert Gore told an audience at the National Council for International Health that emerging infectious disease was "one of the most significant health and security challenges facing the global community," and announced a policy on infectious-disease control that directed the United States to "work with other nations and international organizations to establish a global infectious-disease surveillance-and-response system." But his statement did not mention funding, and the war on emerging disease it proposes is well beyond the current means of any government research or health agency.

Although the U.S. government is the world's single largest supporter of malaria research, we spend relatively little on the problem—roughly $40 million annually, most of it administered by the Department of Defense, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease. The Defense Department seeks to protect the U.S. military from acquiring malaria abroad, and focuses on short-term efforts to benefit soldiers. USAID is controversial among scientists, who complain that the agency has spread itself too thin, hiring consultants who, as one infectious-disease expert put it, "know a lot about economics but not a damn thing about disease." Since USAID funding takes into account particular strategic and political interests of the United States, malaria in Africa is for the most part not a priority. And NIAID, an organization with unquestioned scientific expertise, devotes less than one percent of its budget to malaria—far too little to sustain a strong research base. The CDC also has a role to play. Stephen Morse, a virologist at the Columbia University School of Public Health, says, "The CDC is critical for world control of this disease, yet it's operating on a shoestring." Daniel Colley, who directs the Division of Parasitic Diseases at the CDC, agrees. "Most people assume that we're capable of doing considerably more than we can," he says. "The public-health challenges of malaria are enormous, and we're limited by manpower, time, and financing in our ability to tackle many critical tasks. In relation to the magnitude of the problem, support for research and control of tropical diseases is minimal in this country. Compounding this situation, parasitology has faded from the curriculum of many medical schools in the United States, so although in a glob-



al environment the medical community should know about this problem, it largely doesn't."

The international funding picture is equally dismal—one scientist describes the total infectious-disease budget of the World Health Organization as "at best slightly larger than the budget of a major teaching hospital in Boston." Roughly $85 million a year of public-sector funds is spent internationally on malaria—only about two cents for every reported case of the disease. As one adage has it, "Money is not a problem in malaria research, because, basically, there is no money." Stephen Morse warns that the lack of international attention to the disease amounts to sheer recklessness. "We have been trafficking in microbes—albeit accidentally—for a long time, and many of us are worried about our eroding infectious-disease surveillance-and-response capabilities," he says. "Internationally, funding is tenuous and in great need of improvement."

Still, sporadic attempts have been made to coordinate international efforts at controlling the disease. I witnessed one such effort, an international conference on malaria

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sponsored by the National Institutes of Health, the British Medical Research Council, and the French Institut Pasteur. It was a by-invitation-only affair held in a luxury resort hotel on the ocean about ten miles from Dakar. The President of Senegal, His Excellency Abdou Diouf, presided over the opening ceremonies, attended by a colorfully garbed entourage of ministers and ambassadors. President Diouf expressed his gratitude to the scientists for coming, and spoke gravely of malaria as one of the most terrible problems facing his nation, Africa, and indeed the world. Then he and his retinue left to a flutter of applause, and the session took on a Tower of Babel quality. Western scientists spoke of vaccine and drug development, of biotechnology, of manipulating and transplanting genes. African scientists spoke of a dearth of medical supplies and a lack of basic infrastructure, of bad roads and no refrigeration and a treatment population that thinks malaria comes from the sun. The one thing all parties seemed to agree on was that medical science has dismally failed to get a grip on the disease.

America's Anopheles mosquito population has gone unmonitored for fifty years. Most Americans seem to think that malaria has been eradicated or that it is confined to the tropics. In fact there are few places on earth that cannot sustain a malaria epidemic.

DEADLY, CAGEY, AND RESILIENT

MALARIA is caused by infection with the *Plasmodium* genus of protozoan parasite. More than a hundred species of this parasite exist, capable of infecting reptiles, birds, rodents, and primates. Four species infect human beings, the most common being *P. vivax* and *P. falciparum*. The most pernicious is *P. falciparum*. It is not unheard of for an African child to go to school in the morning and die of *falciparum* infection in the afternoon. Understanding this adds perspective to the public obsession with other fast-acting microbes, such as so-called "flesh-eating" bacteria and the Ebola virus. The 1995 Ebola outbreak in Zaire that inspired Hollywood and transfixed the world caused approximately 250 deaths over a period of six months. More than twenty times that many Africans die every day of malaria.

Malaria parasites have spent centuries adapting to life in the human body, and as a result have grown cagey. Unlike human immunodeficiency virus, or HIV, which both infects and is transmitted by human beings, malaria parasites keep their delivery system separate from their food supply—they do not shoot the messenger. The parasites are transmitted to human beings through the saliva of the female mosquito, which is so efficient at this task that it is sometimes described as a flying syringe. Once injected, the parasites quickly retreat to the liver, where they mature and multiply. It is not until they re-emerge in the bloodstream and invade the blood cells that symptoms appear. By this time the parasites have reproduced thousands of times. They thrash about, popping blood cells, clogging blood vessels, debilitating their host, and in some cases killing within hours.

Like HIV and tuberculosis, malaria does not elicit what is called a complete immune response in human beings: we can be infected with these microbes repeatedly, or carry them for any amount of time, without developing a full resistance to them. Nor do we develop a protective immune response to these diseases, as we do for such infections as polio, measles, and smallpox. Whatever immune reaction we develop appears to occur deep in the cell, and is devilishly difficult to elicit.

"HIV, TB, and malaria are among the most important infectious agents in the world," says Harold Varmus, the director of the National Institutes of Health. "There are no effective vaccines against them, and all have the same property of establishing chronic infection without an effective immune response." Malaria is perhaps the toughest of all, because, as a parasite, it has far more genetic material than a virus or a bacterium has. Never yet has a vaccine been proved successful against a parasite, and malaria is a particularly difficult target for a vaccine, because in each of the several stages it goes through, it has the opportunity to take hold in the host.

Because it is so deadly, the malaria parasite has wielded surprising influence over the way human beings have

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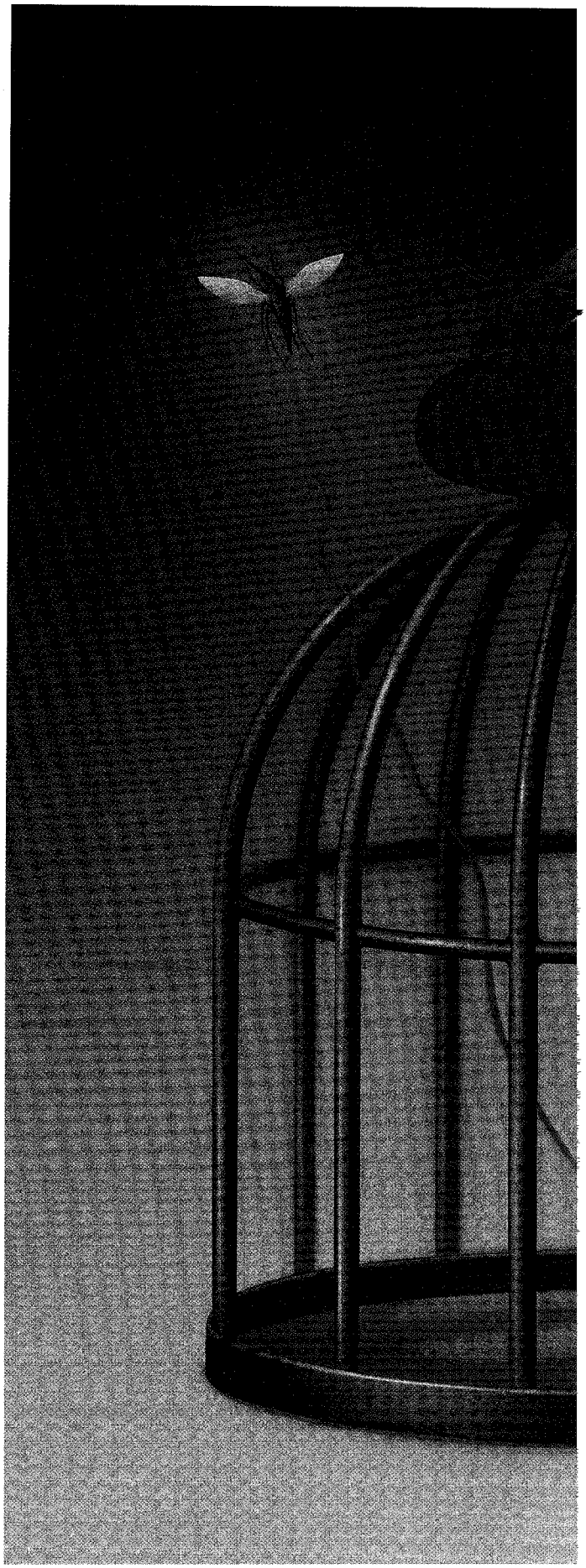
evolved. Sickle-cell anemia, an excruciating and usually fatal genetically transmitted blood disorder, offers the most dramatic example. Historically, victims of sickle-cell disease, who have inherited the sickle-cell gene from both parents, were generally sick much of their lives and tended to die young, often before they had the opportunity to bear children. This should doom sickle-cell in terms of natural selection, which by definition selects for characteristics that ensure that an organism will live long enough to reproduce itself. But the sickle-cell trait, which occurs in people who get the gene from just one parent, is not lethal, and in fact confers partial protection against malaria. People who have the sickle-cell trait may get sick with malaria, but they are unlikely to die of it. In some parts of Africa a quarter of the population has the sickle-cell trait—an almost incredibly high proportion considering that a double dose of the gene is fatal. The evolutionary fact that human beings have taken on a lethal blood disorder in exchange for partial protection against malaria shows the unprecedented power of the disease.

Malaria inspires such fear that forty years ago the World Health Organization targeted it for global eradication. The United States spent heavily on the campaign, in 1958 committing $23 million a year for five years to the WHO program. Worldwide investment in the project ran into the hundreds of millions of dollars, with some Third World countries kicking in 30 to 50 percent of their health-care budgets. The main thrust of the effort was the spraying of powerful, long-lived insecticides into the interior walls of homes. Workers tramped through villages in North Africa and Asia with spray guns loaded with DDT. The target was the *Anopheles gambiae* mosquito, which carried *P. falciparum*.

Hut after hut was sprayed, and untold legions of *A. gambiae* were ambushed. Malaria rates went down, and hopes for public health soared. But the optimism was short-lived. It soon became clear that spraying was most effective in areas that were only marginally malarious—areas such as Egypt and southern Europe, where the parasite had only a slippery hold. Meanwhile, for complex reasons, mosquitoes where malaria was solidly endemic started showing resistance to the insecticides.

In 1969 the Global Eradication of Malaria Program was replaced with a global malaria-*control* strategy. But in 1975 reported malaria incidence was far higher than what it had been fifteen years earlier. Harold Varmus, of the NIH, recalls the impact in India as particularly dramatic. "When I was working there in 1966, I saw almost no malaria," he says. "But when I returned in 1988, there was a raging epidemic. This made a real impression on me. We thought we'd licked malaria in India, but of course we were terribly wrong."

The WHO now estimates that malaria kills as many as 2.7 million people worldwide each year (roughly twice as many as AIDS), and that it sickens as many as half a billion. Chil-



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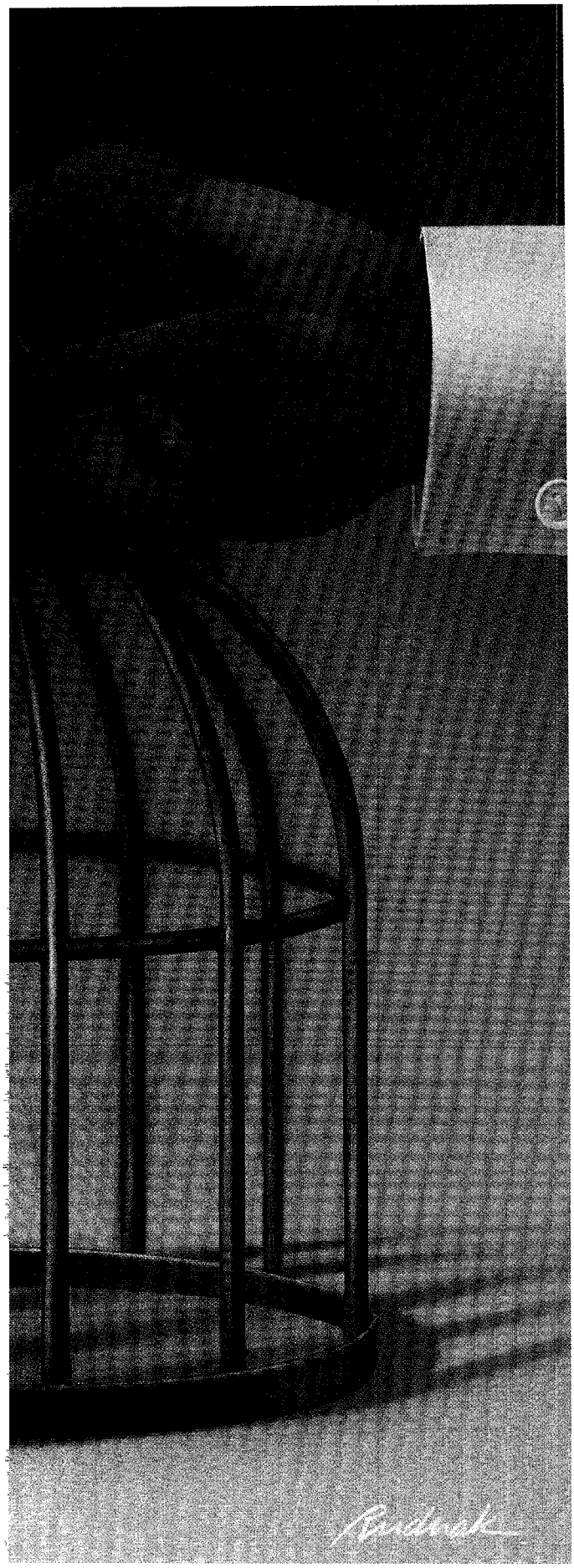

dren infected repeatedly with malaria over a period of about five years generally develop a partial resistance that allows them to carry the parasite in their blood without getting deathly or even overtly ill. Adults develop this partial immunity too, in somewhat less time. But this does not mean that they can no longer be infected; it means only that their bodies have learned to keep the symptoms in check. Malaria parasites have a voracious appetite and in just a few hours can suck as much as a quarter pound of hemoglobin out of the red blood cells of an infected human being. Hundreds of millions of African children and adults are chronically infected with malaria, and are anemic much of the time. Bernard Nahlen, a physician who is studying malaria in Kenya, told me that one in twenty children in the villages surrounding his clinic are so anemic that were their blood tested in the United States, they would be rushed to a hospital for emergency transfusions. Another American physician in Kenya, Patrick Duffy, says that when he has treated Africans with drugs to clear their blood temporarily of malaria parasites, the patients report feeling as they have never felt before—that is to say, well.

SOLUTIONS THAT AREN'T

On the main road leaving Dakar through the savanna of western Senegal traffic thins and the landscape thickens with sorghum, melon, and peanut farms. Manioc sprouts in bushy clumps, and nomadic herders thread flocks of bony goats and long-horned cattle through clumps of mango and baobab trees. Lamine Diawara, a physician, an entomologist, and a commander in the Senegalese army, pulls our pickup truck over to ask directions from a group of people selling oranges by the side of the road. One of them, a man of about twenty in a tattered knee-length tunic and a headdress, swings first a canvas sack of peanuts and then himself into the bed of the pickup. Diawara shrugs and drives on. The truck he has borrowed to make the journey is finicky and slow; we pass horse-drawn carts but no cars. Dignified in his sharply pressed military uniform, Diawara is uncomfortable with silence, and his voice is soft but urgent. Since morning he has spoken of almost nothing but malaria. "Westerners think only of HIV," he tells me. "HIV is horrible, of course. But it is malaria that keeps Africa down."

Diawara is taking me to a village where he often comes to observe and treat patients. The village is a cluster of thatched huts some distance off the main road, on a dirt track that dissolves into a grassy path. Here most of the women have infants slung on their backs, as do some girls who appear to be as young as five. Young men relax in the shade while their wives pound sorghum and sort seeds. The children crowd Diawara, who strides off to seek the elders, five of whom emerge beaming from one of the huts, hands outstretched in greeting. Speaking in Woloff, Diawara asks per-

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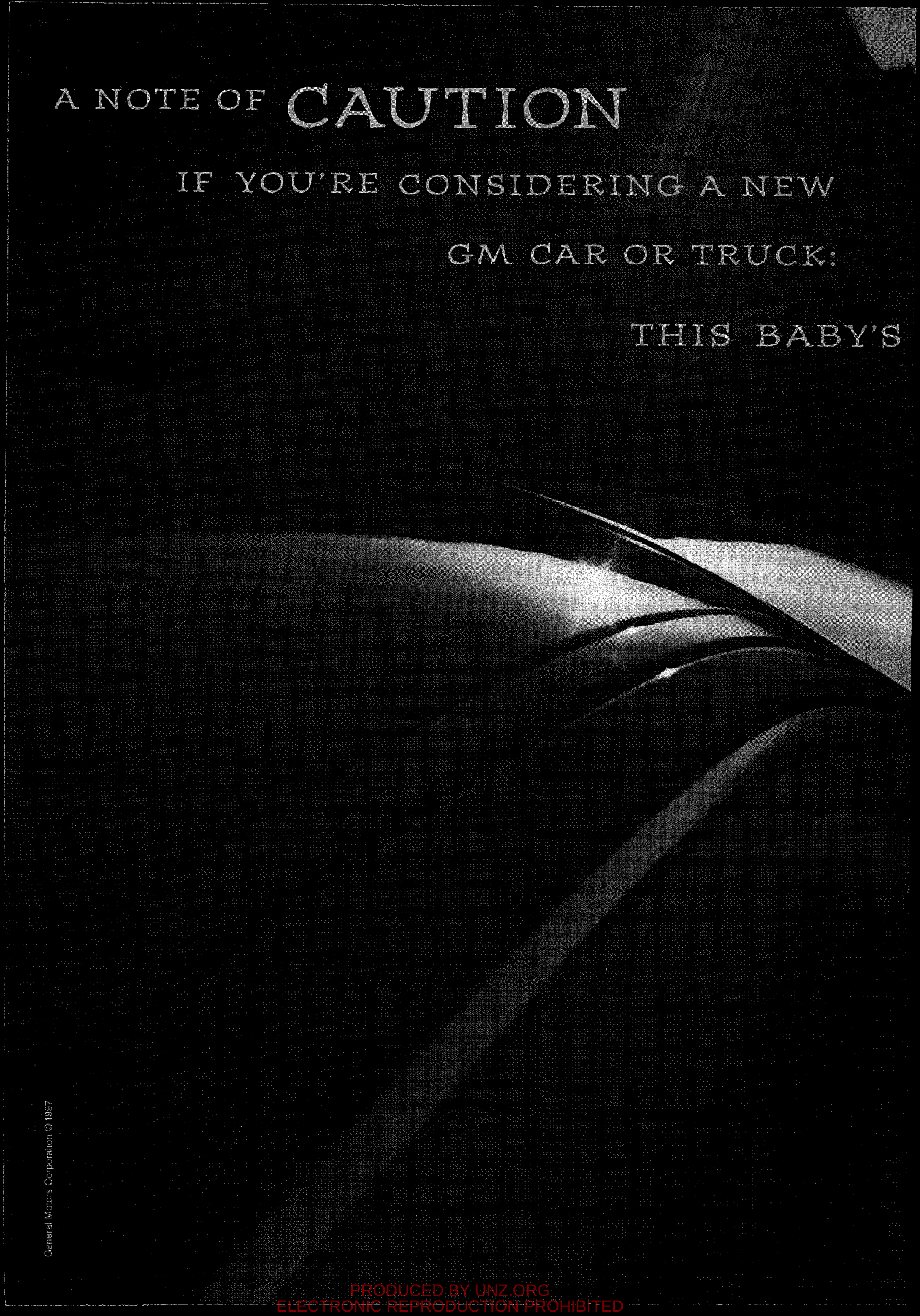

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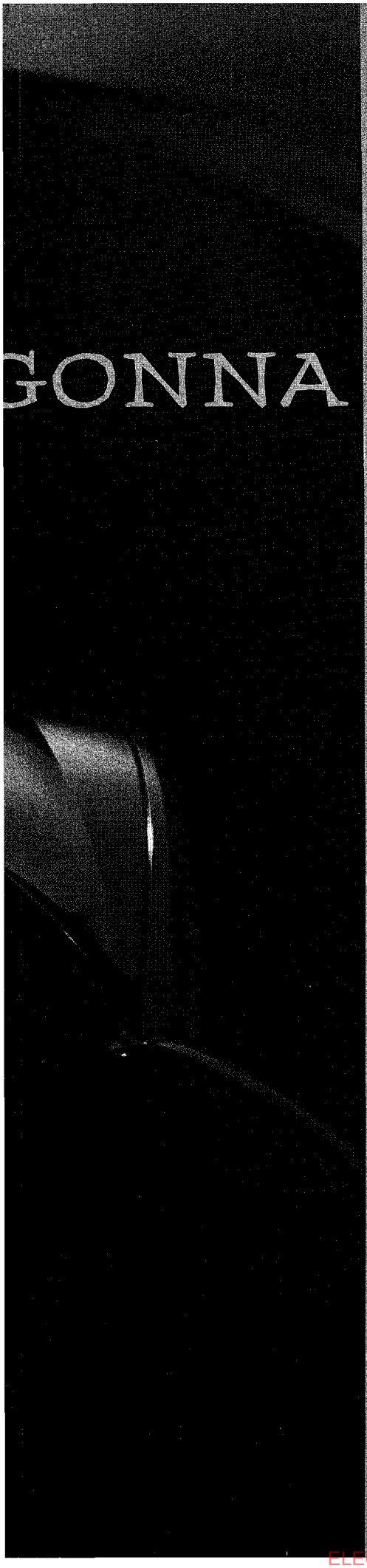

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PEOPLE IN MOTION

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mission to show me around, and they volunteer to serve as guides. I ask if they have been ill lately. The head elder nods, and says he has suffered from malaria four times this season. The others indicate that they, too, have been afflicted. We visit the village clinic, a cement-block hut hung with posters promoting "safe love" in English and Arabic. Inside there are no medical supplies, no equipment, and no lights. There are no medical personnel; a teenager trained in recognizing malaria symptoms comes in from time to time to hand out anti-malaria medications. This is the best that can be hoped for in rural areas, because anti-malaria drugs are costly; often there is no money for them. Another problem is that malaria is diagnosed not by its symptoms, which are ambiguous, but by checking for parasites in the blood, which requires a microscope. There probably isn't a microscope within miles of this place. When fever strikes in Africa, it is often assumed to be malaria, and if drugs are available, they are simply administered. A child may die of measles or meningitis while being treated for malaria.

I ask for a look inside a home and the head elder takes me to his. The single room is clean and cool, and a tightly made double bed fills most of the floor space. The only other object is a billowing mosquito net, whose corners are tucked neatly around the bedposts. Bed nets impregnated with insecticide are widely touted as a cheap and easy way to prevent malaria in the tropics. Many articles and even a book have been written advocating the use of bed nets, and the WHO devotes considerable space on its Web site to the health benefits of nets. I ask the elder if he uses his. He untucks the net, poses beneath it, and asks that I take his photo. Yes, he says, he uses the net. But still he gets malaria. He loses about two or three weeks a year to the disease. He says he is tired much of the time. The other elders nod, smiling. They, too, they say, are tired.

"Nets might help, but they will not cure the problem," Diawara tells me later. We are back in the truck en route to the nearby city of Thiès. "Bed nets reduce exposure, but they cannot stop it. Not all mosquitoes bite people in bed." I ask Diawara if he uses a net, and he says he doesn't. Nor, he presumes, does the elder who posed, or any of the people we just met in the village. "The elder wanted to show respect to a Westerner," he says. "The West brought the nets. But people here do not believe that they work, and most of us do not use them. Nets keep out the breeze, and this is a very hot country."

I learned another reason that mosquito nets are unlikely to solve Africa's malaria problem from Jean-François Trape, a French physician and malaria expert on the staff of the Laboratoire de Paludologie, in Dakar. Since the early nineties Trape has studied malaria transmission in two Senegalese villages, each about four hours' drive from Dakar. One of the villages, Dielmo, has a stream running through it, where *Anopheles* mosquitoes breed year-round. Malaria there is rampant, and children are never without parasites in their blood. The other village, Ndiop, has high malaria transmission only during the rainy season, which lasts about four months. Dielmo residents, exposed to an average of 200 infectious mosquito bites a year, experience an average of forty-three attacks of malaria from birth to age sixty. Ndiop residents, who get roughly ten infectious bites a year, average sixty-two malaria attacks. Trape explains this apparent paradox by pointing out that the villagers of Dielmo are more likely to have the bulk of their attacks during childhood, thereby boosting their resistance to the disease. Their bodies come to an uneasy truce with malaria, in which constant infection weakens but does not kill them. Trape argues that providing people with bed nets to ward off malaria in areas where it is highly endemic may in fact increase their risk of dying from the disease, by reducing but not eliminating their exposure. The *gambiae* mosquito can transmit the malaria parasite in a single bite. If the transmission rate is reduced to fewer than two attacks a year, a person may lose his or her partial resistance to the disease between bouts. Therefore, Trape told me, in areas where malaria transmission is reduced but not eliminated, adults get sicker and older children die at only a slightly later age than do their counterparts where the rate of transmission is higher. "I have two children, and I can tell you, as they get older, you invest in them more," Trape said. "In African culture people prepare for the death of an infant but not a ten-year-old. The nets in many cases simply delay the inevitable."

THIÈS is Senegal's second largest city, after Dakar, but by Western standards it's a village with sprawl. The center is small enough to cover on foot in about an hour, and most of the traffic is human. Goats and chickens poke through the streets, and children stare and wave. Diawara takes me to the Service de Lutte Anti-Parasitaire, which he directs. It is housed in a barrackslike brick structure surrounding an open courtyard where women sit, fanning flies away from buckets of fish. These are technicians' wives, who live here with their children while their husbands do fieldwork. Although Diawara has a wife and four sons in Dakar, he spends most weeknights here, sleeping on a bench in his office. The office is equipped with a computer that collapses from heat exhaustion each summer. A broken air-conditioner lurks near the ceiling. There are no screens on the doors or glass in the windows, but there is a giant-sized can of bug spray. On the wall is a map of Senegal, bristling with straight pins. The pins designate areas where mosquitoes have been trapped, dissected, and examined for parasites. From the dates on the pins I learn that Senegal has been trapping and dissecting mosquitoes for about thirty-five years. Given that most of the country is swarming with parasite-carrying insects, the point of this exercise eludes me.

Diawara introduces me to his head technician, a small, neatly made man of about sixty in a stained lab coat, who

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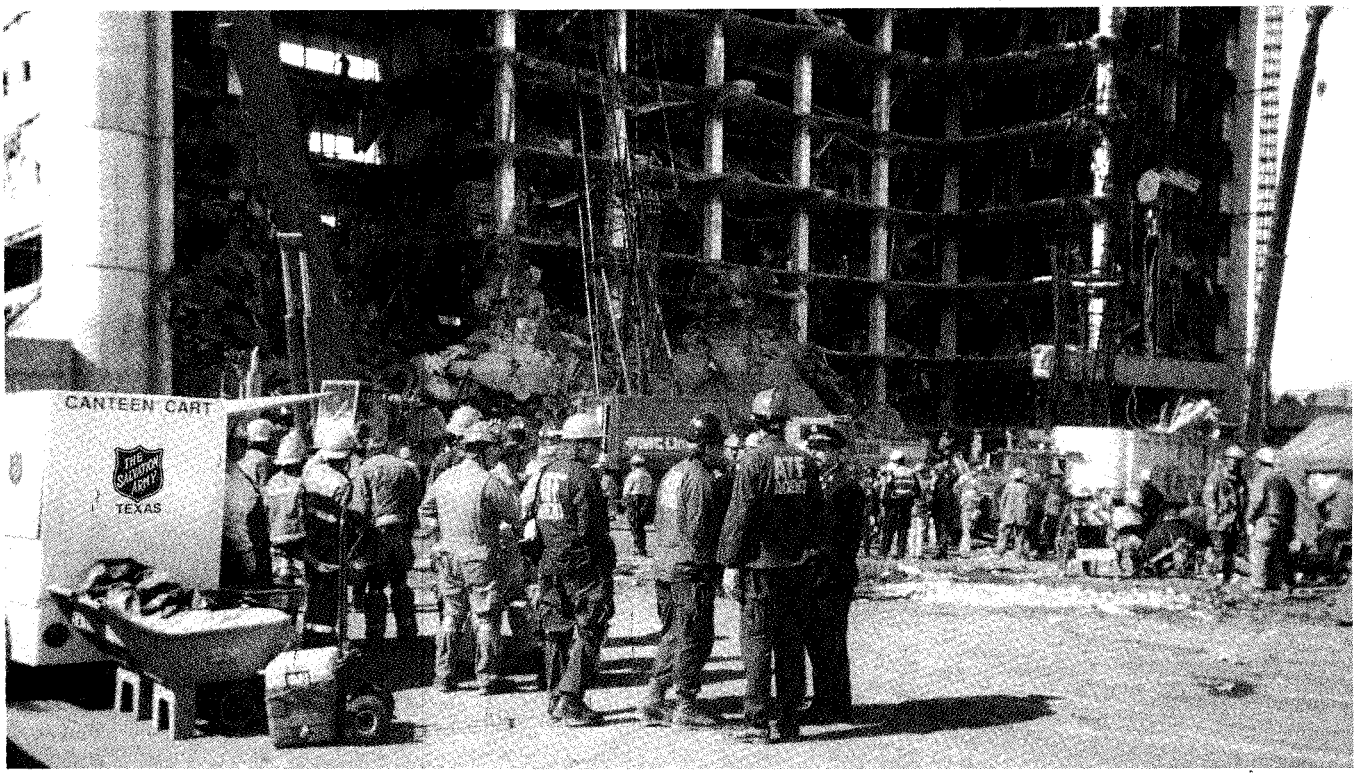

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bows and pulls out tray after tray of mosquitoes. The mosquitoes were snared by the men I noticed lounging in the shade in the village we visited that morning. The men are paid three dollars a session to sit with their pants legs rolled up. Their exposed legs and feet are mosquito bait (malarious mosquitoes have a preference for the lower extremities). When a mosquito alights, the man traps it in a small glass vial. In the rainy season, when transmission is fiercest, a man can trap as many as 300 mosquitoes in an eight-hour shift. Up to one percent of these carry the *falciparum* parasite in their salivary glands.

Diawara sweeps a plastic cover from a microscope, slips in a slide, and focuses expertly to show me *falciparum* in action. What appears under the microscope at this moment looks relatively benign: the malaria parasite is stained a cheery red against the dimmer red of the infected cell. But I have seen greatly enlarged photographs of malaria parasites pouring from the ghostly white hulks of dead blood cells, like soldiers fleeing a scorched-earth spree, and the sight is frightening. Fierce and sometimes fatal anemia is only one consequence of such an attack. The parasite can alter human blood cells so that they adhere to blood vessels; in the case of cerebral malaria the infected cells can occlude capillaries to the brain.

I saw children with cerebral malaria in clinics near Dakar. In one clinic I visited, every child admitted was being treated for it. The head physician there, Mouhaumadou Fall, who is also the chief of pediatrics at the University of Dakar's medical school, explained that it was "pediatric strategy to always treat for malaria, even without proof." The children with full-blown cerebral malaria looked terrible. Their eyes were unfocused under half-closed lids, and they lay absolutely still. Scientists aren't sure, but they believe that cerebral malaria causes brain damage in about 10 percent of cases, and it is estimated that another 10 to 50 percent of cases result in death. But the disease is treatable if caught early enough. One fifteen-month-old at the clinic who just days before had undergone treatment was so lively that his mother joked about stuffing him into her pocket for safekeeping.

For complex reasons, women who have acquired partial resistance to malaria lose it during their first pregnancy, and tend to get very ill with the disease. They are more likely than the uninfected to die in childbirth, and there's about a 40 percent chance that the baby will have a low birth weight.

Malaria can damage the brain and other vital organs, and cause heart failure, respiratory distress, kidney failure, bleeding disorders, and any number of other systemic breakdowns. A study recently conducted in Gambia suggests that almost any estimate of malaria deaths woefully understates the impact of the disease, because the control of malaria seems to bring about a radical reduction in mortality from all causes. The implication is that infection with the parasite greatly increases susceptibility to other infections and to malnutrition. Some scientists have gone so far as to cite malaria as a contributor in half of all childhood deaths in Africa.

Mamadou Kasse, the medical editor of Senegal's largest newspaper, *Le Soleil*, told me that Africans assume that the West considers malaria a necessary evil. "Malaria keeps Africa down, and down is where the rest of the world wants us to be," he said. "If this was a disease of the West, it would be gone." Kasse is not alone in his belief. Several Western scientists told me matter-of-factly that population control, not disease control, is USAID's central mission in Africa. As one scientist told me in a confidential tone, "I'd rather die of malaria than of starvation."

Malaria does not elicit a complete immune response in human beings: we can be infected with these microbes repeatedly, or carry them for any amount of time, without developing a full resistance to them. Never yet has a vaccine against a parasite been proved successful.

Indeed, many Westerners assume that infectious diseases like malaria, tuberculosis, and AIDS are simply the price that the Third World must pay for its population problem. But Jonathan Mayer, a medical geographer at the University of Washington, argues that just the opposite is true—that in effect poor health exacerbates overpopulation. "It's fundamental in demographic transition theory that higher death rates lead to higher birth rates," he says. "Lots of kids die of

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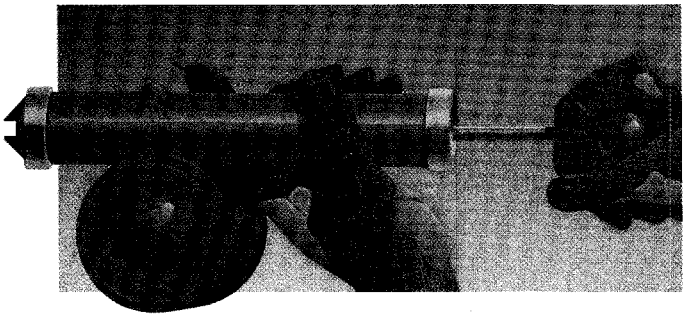
malaria before age five, which means that people will have lots more kids to make sure some stay alive. As an economy becomes more developed, improved public-health measures do lead to a *temporary* increase in population: at first the birth rate stays stable and the death rate goes down. But in as little as twenty years the birth rate goes down as well. That's what happened in the United States and Europe during the latter part of the nineteenth century. We got rid of malaria here, and a whole lot of other infectious diseases, but we don't suffer from overpopulation."

BAD AIR

It is unclear how long malaria parasites have infected human beings, but there is no doubt that the disease is an ancient scourge. Medical historians believe that it appeared with the introduction of agriculture, when the human population grew large enough to serve as a reliable reservoir for malaria parasites. The Chinese canon of medicine, the Nei Ching, which dates from about 2700 B.C., discusses the telltale symptoms of high fever and an enlarged spleen, and



in their writings Aristotle, Homer, and Socrates describe cases of malaria. Hippocrates was the first to associate malaria incidence with proximity to stagnant water. The term *mal'aria* was coined in the sixteenth century by Italians, who insisted that the disease traveled by air. The medical microbiologist Robert Desowitz wrote in his outspoken review of infectious disease, *The Malaria Capers* (1991), that malaria was of particular interest to the English during Victorian times—no surprise, given that at least a third of the hospital beds in their colonies were occupied by victims of the disease. The English carried *P. vivax* with them to Jamestown, and imported *falciparum* along with slaves from Africa. In this country malaria thrived in particular in port cities like Boston and New York, and in the South. A Scottish settler described his bouts with the disease thus: "I am now & then troubled with ye fever & ague wch. Is a very violent distemper here. . . . This place is only good for doctors & ministers." Malaria was among the most common reasons for hospitalization during the Civil War, with the two sides reporting more than 1.2 million cases between them.

Precisely a hundred years ago the British physician Ronald Ross proved that malaria is carried not by air or water but by mosquitoes—a discovery for which Ross was awarded a Nobel Prize. The fact that mosquitoes were involved made the disease all the more frightening, because water could be purified but mosquitoes could not. Malaria was all but gone from the northern United States by the turn of the century, but it maintained a stranglehold on the South. In her forthcoming monograph "Water Won't Run Uphill: The New Deal and Malaria Control in the American South," Margaret Humphreys, a physician and medical historian at Duke University, compares the American South of the early 1900s to today's developing countries, with their colonial infrastructures, weak local governments, and pockets of extreme poverty where both health care and sanitation are minimal. Estimates vary, but there were certainly millions of cases of malaria a year in the South in the mid-1930s. In 1936 the Works Progress Administration hired 36,000 men to drain three million acres of swamp. After that initial push the WPA continued its work on a much smaller scale through 1942, when the Malaria Control in War Areas agency (the predecessor of the Centers for Disease Control) was formed. Soon thereafter the Public Health Service launched an eight-year, $50 million malaria-control program.

The program was an extension of the war effort—the idea was to protect soldiers, and only incidentally civilians. The U.S. government had previous experience attacking malaria in the field: one of the most successful anti-disease campaigns of all time was waged in the Panama Canal Zone, where in 1904–1906 U.S. military engineers and "sanitary police" worked tirelessly to drain swamps and thereby vastly reduce the area of mosquito-breeding sites. This time the goal was to create a malaria-free zone around every military installation in the United States. American pharmacologists developed the anti-malaria drugs primaquine and chloroquine as an alternative to quinine, which at the time was being hoarded by the Japanese. Mosquitoes, officially dubbed "Public Enemy No. 1" by the Public Health Service, were pelted with insecticide bombs concocted by the Army. And DDT, itself a product of the war effort, was sprayed inside millions of American homes. (No matter that American mosquitoes seem to prefer the great outdoors.) The campaign appeared to pay off, and in 1953 America declared victory over *Plasmodium*.

But Humphreys argues convincingly that this victory was not so much a triumph as a happy accident. She reminds us that the digging of ditches was a WPA make-work project, not a systematic effort to clean up malaria-ridden swamps, and quotes a malariologist who wrote at the time that "too often in the past, drainage ditches have been dug up hill, so to speak, by workers with no knowledge of engineering practices. Likewise, ditchdigging specialists have drained areas of little or no importance in malaria control." In the United States malaria had retreated from all but a few locales by 1942, the year

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the Public Health Service launched its anti-malaria campaign. Even in swampy New Orleans a malaria case that turned up in the early 1940s was rare enough to attract a crowd of curious medical students. Humphreys holds that the abrupt decline of malaria in the late 1930s came as a consequence not of ditchdigging and spraying but of the migration of vast numbers of people away from the swamps to the cities.

"It was prosperity, not massive public-health efforts, that caused the decline of malaria in the United States," Humphreys says. "That's something that's not terribly easy to duplicate in the developing world. History tells us that we can't generalize at all from the American experience. The truth is, we still don't know how to control malaria."

For the most part infectious-disease experts have come to agree that what seemed to work in the United States half a century ago will not work in the Third World today. In the tropics mosquitoes breed not just in swamps and ponds but everywhere—in upturned soda bottles, discarded automobile tires, and animal footprints. Even if African nations had the money to drain swamps, doing so would not be enough. Large-scale spraying for mosquitoes is equally impractical in most areas, and even small-scale spraying is problematic. "Rachel Carson's legacy is not entirely positive," says Robert Gwadz, a malaria researcher at the NIH. "DDT is one of the more benign pesticides known." It is certainly among the cheapest. But it is banned or heavily restricted in most African nations, as in the United States, and the alternatives, pyrethroid insecticides, are expensive.

Even if insecticides were magically made available free to all, they would probably fail to solve the global malaria problem. The same chemicals that are used in small amounts to combat malaria are used in large amounts to keep bugs away from crops, a practice encouraged by the demands of agribusiness. Resistance to insecticides is growing rapidly, because insects have tremendous exposure to the chemicals and hence ample opportunity to develop protective tactics.

MALARIA FIGHTS BACK

EQUALLY troubling is the ability of the malaria parasite to develop resistance to drugs. Malaria has for centuries been a treatable disease. Quinine, an anti-malaria compound that is extracted from the bark of the South American cinchona tree, is one of the oldest effective pharmaceuticals in existence. Amazon Indians introduced Jesuit missionaries to the miraculous properties of the substance, and the Jesuits brought it home to Europe in the seventeenth century—thereby, legend has it, saving the lives of many a malaria-stricken cardinal, and perhaps even a Pope or two. This so-called "Jesuit powder" is still useful in the treatment of acute *falciparum* malaria. But it is expensive and short-acting, has side effects ranging from dizziness to deafness, and fails to prevent relapses. Chloroquine, developed during the Second World War, killed malaria parasites and had none of the drawbacks of quinine, but resistance to it has spread throughout the world. A relatively new drug, mefloquine, a synthetic analogue of quinine, is expensive and is losing its effectiveness in many regions. U.S. doctors prescribe these drugs and others to prevent and treat malaria of various kinds.

Qinghaosu, a drug made from *Artemisia annua*, a cousin

HISTORY

If we stare too far ahead
we trip over the feeblest root.

If we look back
we become shadows,
people who pick up accents
from a long stay in a strong country.

If we take too much care,
fearful of the god
whose footfalls we hear approaching,
we go nowhere,
caught in the song
of our age,
a flickering storm of ash
from the raked leaves.

In that flurry
a black butterfly
bats the air
as it dips through the cinders.

Which one's on fire?
Which has a home in this world?

—JOHN SKOYLES

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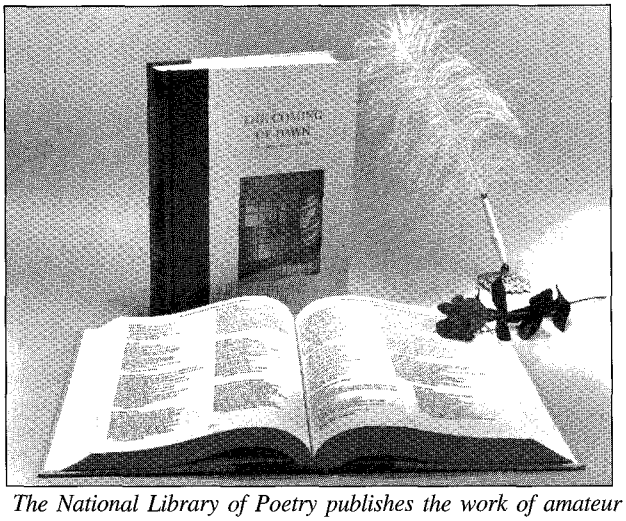
New Poetry Contest
$48,000.00 in Prizes

The National Library of Poetry to award 250 total prizes to amateur poets in coming months



The National Library of Poetry publishes the work of amateur poets in colorful hardbound anthologies like ***The Coming of Dawn,*** *pictured above. Each volume features poetry by a diverse mix of poets from all over the world.*

Owings Mills, Maryland – The National Library of Poetry has just announced that $48,000.00 in prizes will be awarded over the next 12 months in the brand new North American Open Amateur Poetry Contest. The contest is open to everyone and entry is free.

"We're especially looking for poems from new or unpublished poets," indicated Howard Ely, spokesperson for The National Library of Poetry. "We have a ten year history of awarding large prizes to talented poets who have never before won any type of writing competition."

How To Enter

Anyone may enter the competition simply by sending in ***ONLY ONE*** original poem, any subject, any style, to:

The National Library of Poetry
P.O. Box 350-14910
Stevenson, MD 21153

Or enter online at **www.poetry.com**

The poem should be no more than 20 lines, and the poet's name and address must appear on the top of the page. "All poets who enter will receive a response concerning their artistry, usually within seven weeks," indicated Mr. Ely.

Possible Publication

Many submitted poems will also be considered for inclusion in one of The National Library of Poetry's forthcoming hardbound anthologies. Previous anthologies published by the organization have included *On the Threshold of a Dream*, *Days of Future's Past*, *Of Diamonds and Rust*, and *Moments More to Go*, among others.

"Our anthologies routinely sell out because they are truly enjoyable reading, and they are also a sought-after sourcebook for poetic talent," added Mr. Ely.

World's Largest Poetry Organization

Having awarded over $150,000.00 in prizes to poets worldwide in recent years, The National Library of Poetry, founded in 1982 to promote the artistic accomplishments of contemporary poets, is the largest organization of its kind in the world. Anthologies published by the organization have featured poems by more than 100,000 poets.

"We're always looking for new poetic talent," said Mr. Ely. "I hope you urge your readers to enter the contest. There is absolutely no obligation whatsoever, and they could be our next big winner."

Enter online at **www.poetry.com**

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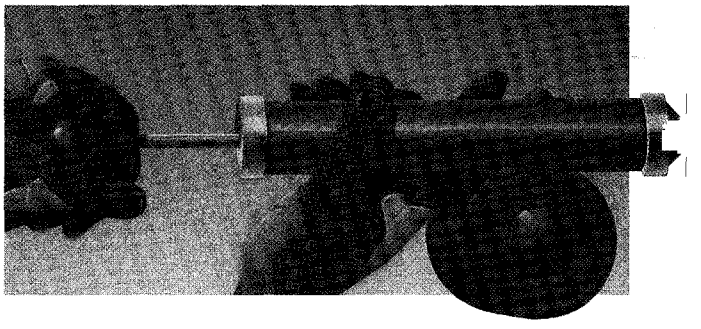
of wormwood which grows wild in fields and thickets across China, and a favorite of natural healers the world over, is showing the strain of overuse as well. Practitioners of traditional Chinese medicine have used qinghaosu to treat fevers for something like 2,000 years, though whether in its natural form it actually kills the malaria parasite is unclear. Like quinine, qinghaosu fails to prevent relapses of the disease, and may be neurotoxic. Gary Posner, who is the Scowe Professor of Chemistry at Johns Hopkins University, and his coworkers have synthesized a simplified version of the substance that Posner thinks may overcome these problems, but he has yet to find a drug company willing to develop it. "We have been contacted by several biotechnology companies," Posner says, "but the first question they ask is, 'Have you got a product yet?' Of course we don't. Taking this compound from the lab to the market would take from six to ten years and cost several hundred million dollars. You can't do it in a university laboratory."

Linda Nolan, a biochemist at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, who has studied anti-parasitic plants in South America and elsewhere, argues that once a parasite has developed resistance to a drug, it is a fairly short step from there to resisting the entire class to which the drug belongs. This is why, she believes, chloroquine, mefloquine, and other drugs closely related to quinine are sinking fast. "What is needed is an entirely new class of drugs," she says. "You have to look everywhere—in the sea, in the soil. You don't know until you look where you might find something that works." Richard Levins, the John Rock Professor of Population Science at the Harvard School of Public Health, agrees that we would do well to look to plants for insights into how to develop permanent resistance to pathogens. Plants use a spectrum of strategies to deal with predators, he says, and they never presume they have a problem licked. But scientists are also looking for ways to overcome drug resistance that don't involve lengthy trial-and-error procedures with wild plants.

A few years ago the Harvard researcher Dyann Wirth identified a protein on the membrane of the malaria parasite which helps to explain why the parasite develops resistance so quickly. The protein works like a nightclub bouncer, hustling undesirable anti-malaria drugs away from the interior of the cell. This mechanism, sometimes described as a protein "pump," is also found on the surface of cancer cells that do not respond to chemotherapy. In the case of malaria, the pump has a terrifying aspect, in that it allows the parasite to resist drugs it has never before encountered. Any drug that remotely resembles a drug the parasite "knows" to be unfriendly is, as one scientist put it, "spit out rather than sucked in."

"Unless you can reverse this pump mechanism, you are going to encounter resistance pretty consistently," Wirth says. "Right now we're trying to find a way around it." But some human cells contain similar pump mechanisms that fulfill such critical functions as preventing material in the bloodstream from going directly into the brain. What is needed, Wirth says, is a drug that works only on the malaria-parasite pump. "To find this we'd have to screen hundreds of thousands of compounds, and that requires the cooperation of a major drug company," she says. "Unfortunately, no major drug company in the world is involved in the research to develop new anti-malarials."

The dearth of new anti-malaria drugs has recently taken on a particularly urgent significance. The Thai-Cambodian border region harbors a variety of malaria that responds to no known drug. This densely forested territory has in the past decade or so been invaded by gem miners in search of rubies and emeralds, soldiers, and Cambodian refugees fleeing the Khmer Rouge. Virtually all these people come down with malaria, regardless of the precautions they take, and get very sick. Many of the refugees do not have access to medical care; some get well, and some die. But the miners try drug after drug, in an attempt to stay on their feet long enough to make their fortune before going home. This has encouraged the parasites to develop resistance, and this



multi-drug-resistant malaria has spread from the border deep into Thailand and Cambodia, and as far as India, Bangladesh, and Nepal.

"Thailand has been the site where drug resistance gets its start," Dyann Wirth says. "In regions of high transmission there is resistance to all of the registered anti-malaria drugs except *Artemisia*, which has been recently introduced. There is evidence of multiple-resistant parasites in these regions."

Brazil is another cradle of drug resistance. Unlike Thailand, which has long been losing the battle against malaria, Brazil had greatly reduced incidence of the disease in the 1960s. But malaria returned in the 1980s, in a strain that is highly drug-resistant. Wirth told me of a town in the Amazon forest where the risk of getting malaria over the course of a year is virtually 100 percent. Gold miners here dig holes in the ground, pump them full of water, concentrate whatever gold they find with mercury, and sift through the resulting sludge. The mercury is terribly dangerous—and so are the mosquitoes that breed in the muddy water. The Brazilian government is eager to develop this area, and offers land as a lure. Most takers come from coastal regions, and have

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never before been exposed to jungle malaria strains. Like the miners in Thailand, they get deathly ill. Their only recourse is mefloquine, but that may be simply a temporary solution. Mefloquine resistance was quick to develop in Thailand, and Wirth and her colleagues are grimly curious to see whether it develops just as quickly under similar conditions in Brazil.

At the conference in Dakar scientists exuded what I was told was an unusual level of optimism that the control of malaria, though not imminent, was at least possible. This hopefulness was inspired by the announcement of several new drug strategies and, more to the point, the development of a new anti-malaria vaccine. It is not the first vaccine to have been attempted; given the mercurial nature of the malaria parasite and the ubiquity of the mosquito that carries it, a vaccine is now widely considered the only realistic hope for gaining control of the disease.

In the West early success in controlling infectious disease has bred arrogance and a belief in whopping big solutions—vaccines and antibiotics that wipe out rather than contain. Our attacks have made malaria not weaker and less certain but more virulent.

In a report titled "Vaccines Against Malaria: Hope in a Gathering Storm," published last year, a committee from the Institute of Medicine, a research organization chartered by the National Academy of Sciences, wrote, "Widespread application of a vaccine that can prevent the illness and death of malaria could be one of the most important advances in medicine, with the potential for improving the lives of hundreds of millions of people." It has not gone unnoticed by scientists that discovery of such a vaccine is the stuff of which Nobel Prizes are made, and competition in the field is fierce.

In the late 1980s Manuel Elkin Patarroyo, a flamboyant and charismatic Colombian immunologist, garnered headlines when he announced that he had developed a malaria vaccine, SPf66, that in a trial had protected monkeys and, to a lesser degree, Colombian soldiers from infection. A second trial in Colombia proved equally promising, and Patarroyo became a folk hero in South America, Asia, Africa, and even Europe, which showered him with praise and awards. But more recent field tests in Gambia and Thailand were disappointing. In Gambia the vaccine offered almost no protection, and in Thailand subjects given the vaccine seemed to have a slightly *higher* risk of contracting malaria than subjects given a control. Patarroyo, who donated the license for SPf66 to the WHO in 1995, remains adamant that his vaccine is effective. Howard Engers, the manager of the steering committee on vaccines for malaria at the WHO, told me that the agency is reserving judgment until the results of yet another trial, in Tanzania, are complete. He cautioned that the WHO is not sponsoring the Tanzanian trial, implying that it may be less reliable than earlier tests, but then hastened—a bit nervously, I thought—to pay his respects to Patarroyo. "Irrespective of the final outcome of SPf66," Engers said, "or of Dr. Patarroyo's apparently promising second-generation vaccines, it is clear that he and his collaborators have had a major impact on the malaria-vaccine-development field over the past ten years or so."

Not all scientists are impressed. At the meeting in Dakar several grumbled that what they saw as Patarroyo's grandstanding had in fact set the field back, by encouraging the erroneous idea that malaria had been cured. "After his announcement, the field crashed, because many governments assumed that the problem had been solved," says Carole Long, a malaria specialist in the Department of Microbiology and Immunology at Allegheny University of Health Sciences. Others hinted that WHO support of Patarroyo was due as much to intimidation as to the agency's faith in his science. Several mentioned Patarroyo's habit of accusing his detractors of being jealous racists resentful of a Third World upstart rising above his station.

"Patarroyo is a very talented, unique individual, but he's under very strong pressure and he tends to personalize things," says W. Ripley Ballou, the acting director of the Division of Communicable Diseases at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, who was involved in the test of SPf66 in Thailand. "Here's a guy on his own, with no FDA, no drug company, working out of an attic of an aging building, and he comes up with a vaccine that seems to protect thirty percent of people who get it. So then he builds a beautiful facility, puts a huge amount of money into a detailed charac-

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terization of his product, and puts it out there for others to test. And it turns out that in two really good trials SPf66 simply does not work. The devil is in the details."

Ballou has devoted the better part of his career to mucking around in the details of malaria-vaccine development. In January, *The New England Journal of Medicine* announced results from a vaccine trial that he and his group at Walter Reed designed in conjunction with scientists from the pharmaceutical company SmithKline Beecham. Volunteers were paid $600 to be injected with either the vaccine or a control, feasted on by malaria-carrying mosquitoes, and observed in a nearby hotel, where after seven days' incubation their blood was checked daily for parasites. Seven volunteers got the active vaccine, and the blood of only one contained malaria parasites—evidence enough, Ballou says, to warrant a field test of the vaccine in Gambia. It got under way this past March.

But not even Ballou believes that the vaccine will prevent all children from getting malaria in Gambia, a densely forested sliver of West Africa floating in mangrove swamps and saline marshes. Gambia is where SPf66 and a long line of other vaccine candidates have met their Waterloo. The SmithKline vaccine was designed to counter a particular strain of malaria, not the mishmash of strains that occur in the wild. And it's not at all certain that the vaccine will stand up to repeated challenges: the volunteers at Walter Reed were infected once, but children in Gambia are infected up to three or four times a night.

"This is an enormous human and scientific challenge," Ballou says. "Of course I hope it works, but I will be very happy if it fails and we understand why. This problem is really bigger than ourselves." Traditional vaccinology has depended almost entirely on making better antigens, on boosting the body's natural immune response. But in malaria the human immune response is incomplete and jagged.

"We've protected hundreds of thousands of mice against malaria, but we haven't learned to transfer that model to humans," Dyann Wirth says. "This may be a system where animal models don't teach us what's important for human disease."

Richard Levins, of Harvard, says that by focusing on vaccines we are taking too narrow an approach. "Pathogens evolve; they learn how to hide in the central nervous system to avoid attack by vaccines. They change their surface chemistry regularly so that the vaccine cannot recognize them. And vaccines work only if they are used consistently. If the system breaks down, if there is a war or social unrest, vaccine programs fall apart."

Lamine Diawara also advocates a more nuanced approach, one that would contain malaria region by region, until it retreats into the background of everyday life in the tropics. "Malaria is our environment; it is part of what we are," he says. "To control it we must take care not to disturb the equilibrium, to respect the local ecology and customs, to work with human behavior as well as with science." Diawara believes that education would do much to stem the tide of the disease—as would public-health measures such as the drainage of standing water and the judicious use of insecticides and drugs.

Pedro Alonso, a physician and an epidemiologist at the University of Barcelona, who oversaw the first SPf66 trials in Africa, explained to me how malaria was wiped out in Spain with just such a low-key approach. The Spanish Civil War, in 1936–1939, somehow prompted a resurgence of malaria in his country, and it hung on stubbornly into the 1950s. Pesticides were tried and they helped, but not enough. The Spanish stood back and reassessed the situation—why this resurgence of malaria after war? What had been disrupted? They couldn't be sure what, but something had increased the mosquito population. The trick was to reverse the process. They stocked their ponds and lakes with gambusia, a fish that eats mosquito larvae. "Now Spain has an enormous number of gambusia," Alonso said, laughing, "but almost no malaria."

China's Hunan province, too, has beaten back malaria: its caseload fell from nearly a million in 1985 to 68,500 in 1993. No new drugs or vaccines were used; rather, a mixture of strategies was employed. Swamps were selectively drained, and malaria cases were quickly treated with both traditional and Western medicines.

But in the West early success in controlling infectious disease has bred arrogance and a belief in whopping big solutions—vaccines and antibiotics that wipe out rather than contain. We know successful pathogens to be highly evolved and clever creatures, but we bluster about, attacking them as though they were the dumb, plodding aggressors that perhaps we ourselves are. When a microbe mutates around our onslaught, we go off in search of a bigger weapon with which to blast it. But like all re-emerging diseases, malaria has managed not only to dodge the bullets but also to turn the revolver back on us. Our attacks have made the parasite not weaker and less certain but more virulent. Controlling this disease requires vigilance, patience, and, to a certain degree, sacrifice—there are places we might have to avoid. There are tradeoffs to be made, but so far we've shown ourselves reluctant to make them. Scientists pursue their quest for an effective vaccine or a more powerful drug while treasure hunters of another kind in Thailand and Brazil help the disease find a new foothold. Whether the scientific adventures will eventually pay off is uncertain, but for now there's no question that a price is being paid. Malaria, an ancient disease, a controllable disease, is spreading.

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Diamond Nuggets

by ROY BLOUNT JR.

All the weekly baseball notes you'll ever really need

BIGGEST Oriole question mark—ailing stopper Laird Dealie's elbow woes—was answered in the negative Friday, perhaps for good, in the first inning of Dealie's first outing since his injury-plagued left bursal sac went under the knife for the third time, last May. "I had command, I had location, but then I tried to waste an 0–2 splitter in the dirt and heard a noise like linoleum ripping," Dealie told reporters. How did it feel? "I just thought, 'Here we go again.'"

When he heard the noise? "No, just now, when you asked me how it felt. Go tear *your* elbow out and put it into words."

Postgame the formerly dominant lefty underwent a fourth bout of reconstructive surgery on the troubled joint, which was rebuilt using cartilage from his ears and a ligament from the ankle of pitching coach Mel Pehr. "Next year I'm going

Illustrations by Barrett Root

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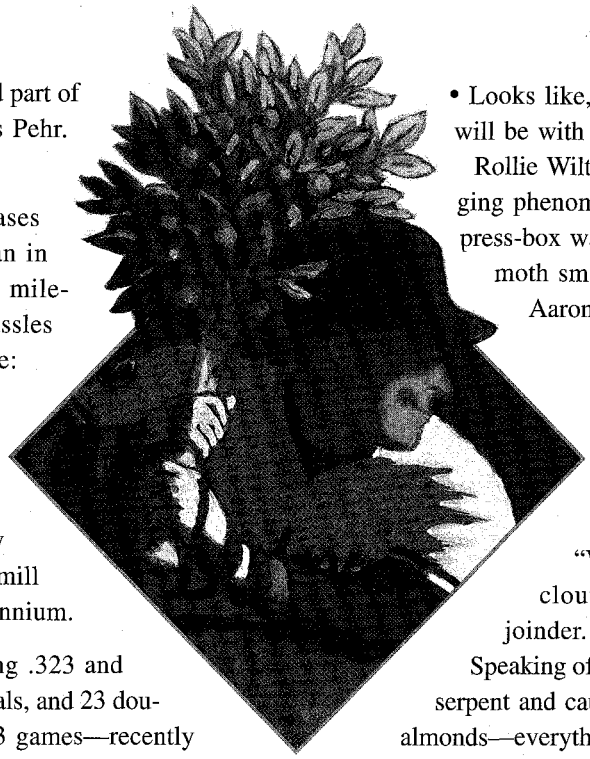
wire to wire," vows Dealie. "And part of me'll be there with him," quips Pehr. We'll see.



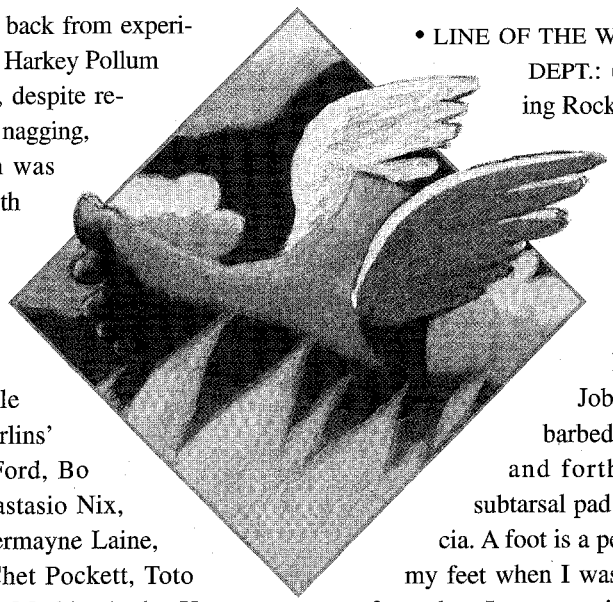
• Emanuel Vesto is just two bases shy of becoming the 138th man in history to reach the 300-pilfer milestone, but contract-extension hassles have left him reluctant to slide: "These legs put my children's food on the table. Why should my family have to be insecure about what I'll be making in 2002? It's affecting my intensity level." Current $53.5-mill pact expires just after the millennium.

• Cub SS Porter Creach—batting .323 and slugging .523 with 23 HR, 23 steals, and 23 doubles in 423 AB over his last 123 games—recently turned twenty-four. "Kind of ironic, isn't it?" said the taciturn Creach. "Well, that's baseball."

• Mets have farmed set-upper Chad DeSisto to Single-A St. Lucie. "We were pleased with his mechanics," says a front-office source, "and he had a lot of presence on the mound—plus you couldn't measure the intangibles he potentially gave us. But he had lost two inches off his velocity."

• Both pitchers' and hitters' unions are closely following progress of suit filed by Tito Jolly to redefine a quality start, in light of run inflation, as five innings giving up fewer than five ER. Jolly's pact calls for bonus of $55,000 per quality start. Any trend toward adjustment for inflation is likely to be opposed by hitters, concerned their own incentives might be jeopardized.

• TOUCHY, TOUCHY: His battle back from experimental groin surgery is something Harkey Pollum refuses to discuss with the press, despite reported movie interest. Groin is still nagging, teammates confide, but Pollum was mum Thursday after consulting with groin specialist Dr. Shane Ng on the heels of four straight whiffs against Indians.



• Pulvio Lentz cleared the Fenway Monster twice Friday while blanking Sox, which gave the Marlins' LHP more dingers than Jirod Ford, Bo Clear, Motorola Joralemon, Anastasio Nix, Cobia Seay, Bamalam Copay, Jermayne Laine, Luc Estacion, Mickey Berry, Chet Pockett, Toto Lavallier, Ellis Booley, Spackle Mathis, Andre Umphree, and Cesar Spang—*combined.*

• Looks like, barring tragic injury, The Force will be with us for a while. Eyeing the arc of Rollie Wilt's 3–0 cripple picked on by slugging phenom Wilton "The Force" Coursey, a press-box wag shook his head over the mammoth smash and wondered aloud, "Ruth? Aaron?"

Came back the quip, "People to compare him to, or books in the Bible?"

To which was rejoined, "Aaron's not a book, he's Moses' brother."

"We will be too, by the time that clout comes down," was the re-re-joinder.

Speaking of biblical Aaron, he turned rod into serpent and caused it to bud, blossom, and bear almonds—everything but make contact with horsehide. That's about what Tintin Coates did to Dodger lumber in 2–0 whitewash Wednesday. "He threw us more knucklers than we could shake a stick at," sighed L.A.'s Bobby "Chef" Boyardy. But they tried.

• That frayed rotator-cuff fringe revealed in his last MRI has not kept Duwane Tice from spending off days speaking to junior high schools about the perils of nondeferred compensation: "If I can save even one kid from confiscatory taxation, it'll be worth it."

• QUOTE OF THE WEEK: "Anything I have to say to that [expletive expletive] I'll say to his face. I don't need to send that [expletive expletive] messages through the media"—Herc Kibble after Astro RHP Tarlton Pye was quoted as calling him an [expletive].

• LINE OF THE WEEK, SIGN OF TWO BEASTS DEPT.: (Noland Tollefer, Tuesday, facing Rockies): 6 6 6 6 6 6

• NAME OF THE WEEK: Waterloo Fanning, DH-ing at Medicine Hat.

• OKAY, WHATEVER: In the wake of rumors about his suspect left foot, Red IF/OF Job Sootlich snapped, "It feels like barbed arrows of hellfire running back and forth from the [hyperextended] subtarsal pad to the [further torn] plantar fascia. A foot is a personal thing. My mother kissed my feet when I was a little child. I stood on these feet when I was married. My foot is not in my own hands—all I can do is try to do a good job exemplifying

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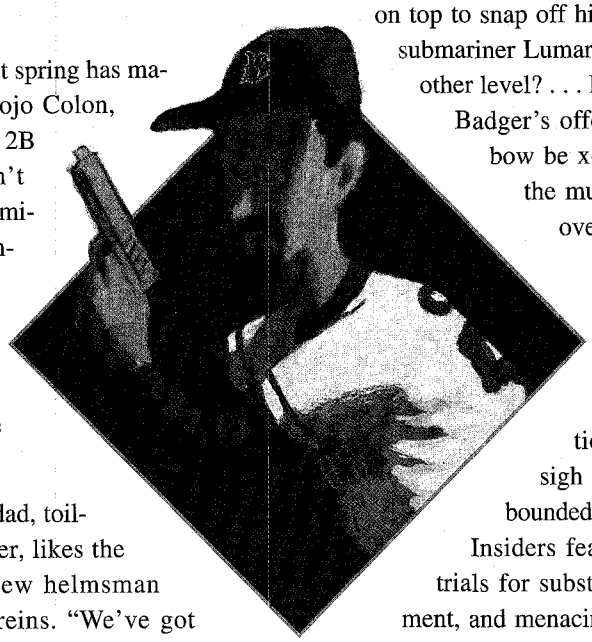
Jesus Christ." Hey, Job, how about this: "sooties" is what Elvis and mom called their feet.

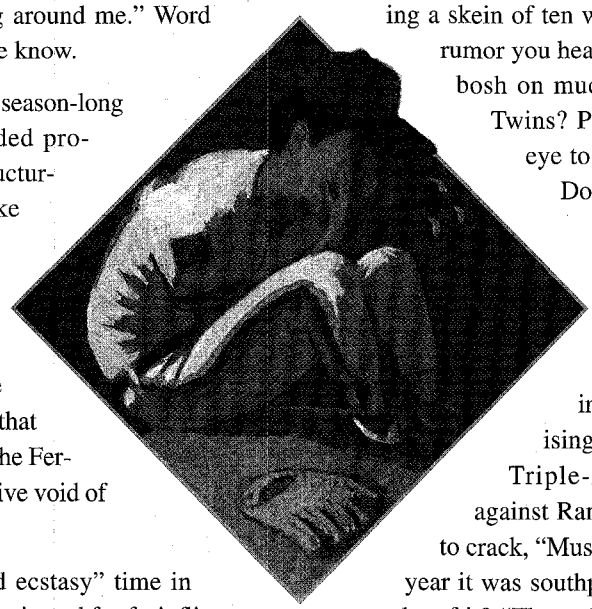


• What began simply as a flyer last spring has matured into full-fledged reality: Tojo Colon, who had the best raw tools of any 2B under twenty-seven but couldn't budge ironman keystoner Flea Armiento from his slot, has found himself at the hot corner. "He always had that gun and those soft hands," says Sox scout Doggie Schepp, "and now he's proving acclimated around the other bag."

• Old Anaheim hand Cleve Trinidad, toiling under his ninth career skipper, likes the clubhouse atmosphere since new helmsman Solly Mele took over Angels' reins. "We've got that looseness mentality, so guys are tight enough to get on guys without the personal vendettas. We're not dead like we were." They still trail A's by twelve.

• NO MORE GERBILS FOR INDIANS: After Quilvio Hein was hobbled by a rib-cage strain resulting from mishap experienced while assembling his son's gerbil environment, Tribe front office issued clarification of contract provisions regarding pets. "With just 'potentially hazardous animals' it was left too wide open for interpretation," said GM Mel Orny.

• Bouncing courageously back from removal of scar tissue formed after ulnar-nerve surgery, Joaquin Pez is handling the bat with authority, spraying it around with pop. "My shoulder's made super strides," he says. "Now, if trade rumors would only stop swirling around me." Word around the league is, little does he know.



• In a dizzying ending to a bizarre season-long story line, Detroit abruptly ended prolonged off-and-on contract-restructuring negotiations with agent Deke "Quickie" Norway on learning that Norway did not actually represent any player. "He talked a good game," said a red-faced Tiger exec. One more major disaster for a front office that shot itself in the foot big time on the Ferret-Morganza deal and has a massive void of talent to show for it.

• SHORT HOPS: It's "agony and ecstasy" time in Cleveland . . . After Dome was fumigated for fruit flies, LHP Dody Ilster fanned a career-high eleven over five and two thirds . . . Mel Grobel's shoulder is so bad he can't get on top to snap off his slider . . . Can we say Mariner submariner Lumar Varcy has taken his game to another level? . . . Blanked for six innings by Darrin Badger's offerings, Royals demanded his elbow be x-rayed for foreign substance, but the much-whittled joint checked out at over 60 percent organic. "They were just trying to throw me off my rhythm," said Badger . . . Cope Wigbe's strained left rib cage sent a shudder through the whole Brewers organization—which breathed a collective sigh of relief when the Big Ticket rebounded with no long-term implications . . . Insiders fear Evangelisto Crispo's looming trials for substance possession, false imprisonment, and menacing of a female relative can't help but affect him mentally at the plate . . . Talk about hair-trigger men in blue: Kelso Outlar turned to vet arbiter Rollie Babondi the other night at Wrigley after a close strike call and said, "*Wha . . . ?*" "Watch it," said Babondi. "I'll run you." "For saying '*Wha . . . ?*'" demanded Outlar, open-mouthed. Rollie ran him . . . Addition of Jansen "Mr. Ed" Orengo, no longer hobbled by shoulder-fluid buildup, to the already arm-rich Expo staff creates a rotation dilemma, but "that's the kind of dilemma you like to have," says new director of player personnel Pooh Lupis . . . Tuesday night Adrian Cherney became first Giant hurler since the Second World War to cry openly on the mound . . . When the Yanks' Olen Linker blooped meekly to short Monday, it marked his first soft liner of the campaign . . . Sushi Inoko surrendered two free passes to Orioles Thursday, breaking a skein of ten walkless starts . . . The next Trout rumor you hear may be Atlanta . . . What put kibosh on much-rumored three-way deal with Twins? Padres', Bluejays' inability to see eye to eye . . . Inflamed Achilles forced Donnie Poppe to sit during the Cards' western swing . . . Yes, that was Hibbett Wangel in another bizarre incident . . . Cedric Smallwood, filling in for Coby Deplane (groin damage) in center till Lejermian Tyle's promising glove could be summoned from Triple-A Buffalo, muffed routine fly against Rangers, prompting a press-box wag to crack, "Must've been something E-8" . . . Last year it was southpaws. This year, righties. What to make of it? "These things," says Tulsa GM Ping Leggio, "go in cycles."

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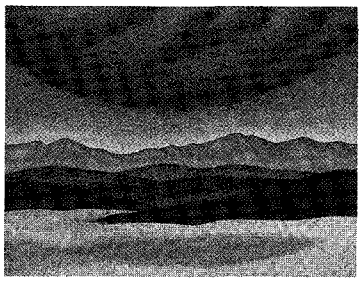
Satan: Hijacker of a Planet

by LOUISE ERDRICH



ON the outskirts of a small town in the West, on an afternoon when rain was promised, we sat upon the deck of our new subdivision ranchette and watched the sky pitch over Hungry Horse. It was a drought-dry summer, and in the suspension of rain everything seemed to flex. The trees stretched to their full length, each leaf open. I could almost feel the ground shake the timbers under my feet, as if the great searching taproots of the lodgepole pines all around trembled. Lust. Lust. Still, the rain held off. I left my mother sitting in her chair and went to the old field behind the house, up a hill. There the storm seemed even likelier. The wind came off the eastern mountains, smelling like a lake, and the grass reached for it, butter-yellow, its life concentrated in its fiber mat, the stalks so dry they gave off puffs of smoke when snapped. Grasshoppers sprang from each step I took, tripped off my arms, legs, glasses. I saw a small pile of stones halfway up the hill, which someone had cleared once, when this was orchard land. I sat down and continued to watch the sky as, out of nowhere, great solid-looking clouds built hot stacks and cotton cones. The trend was upward, upward, until you couldn't feel it anymore. I was sixteen years old.

I was looking down the hill, waiting for the rain to start, when his white car pulled into our yard. The driver was a big man, built long and square just like the Oldsmobile. He was wearing a tie and a shirt that was not yet sweaty. I noticed this as I was walking back down the hill. I was starting to notice these things about men—the way their hips moved when they hauled feed or checked fence lines. The way their forearms looked so tanned and hard when they rolled up their white sleeves after church. I was looking at men not with intentions, because I didn't know yet what I would have done with one if I got him, but with a studious mind.

I was looking at them just to figure, for pure survival, the way a girl does. The way a farmer, which my dad was before he failed, gets to know the lay of the land. He loves his land, so he has to figure how to cultivate it—what it needs in each season, how much abuse it will sustain, what in the end it will yield.

> The stars are the eyes of God, and they have been watching us from the beginning of the world. Do you think there isn't an eye for each of us? Go on and count

And I, too, in order to increase my yield and use myself right, was taking my lessons. I never tried out my information, though, until the man arrived, pulled with a slow crackle into our lake-pebble driveway. He got out and looked at me where I stood in the shade of my mother's butterfly bush. I'm not saying that I flirted right off. I didn't know how to. I walked into the sunlight and looked him in the eye.

"What are you selling?" I smiled, and told him that my mother would probably buy it, since she had all sorts of things—a pruning saw you could use from the ground, a

Illustrations by Amy Crehore

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cherry pitter, a mechanical apple peeler that also removed the seeds and core, a sewing machine that remembered all the stitches it had sewed. He smiled back at me and walked with me to the steps of the house.

"You're a bright young lady," he said, though he was young himself. "Stand close. You'll see what I'm selling by looking into the middle of my eyes."

He pointed a finger between his eyebrows.

"I don't see a thing," I told him, as my mother came around the corner, off the deck out back, holding a glass of iced tea in her hand.

While they were talking, I didn't look at Stan Anderson. I felt challenged, as if I were supposed to make sense of what he did. At sixteen I didn't have perspective on the things men did. I'd never gotten a whiff of that odor that rolls off them like an acid. Later only a certain look was required, a tone of voice, a word, no more than a variation in the way he drew breath. A dog gets tuned that way, sensitized to an exquisite degree, but it wasn't like that in the beginning. I took orders from Stan as if I were doing him a favor—the way, since I'd hit my growth, I'd taken orders from my dad.

My dad, who was at the antiques store, gave orders only when he was tired. All other times he did the things he wanted done himself. My dad was not, in the end, the man I should have studied if I wanted to learn cold survival. He was too ineffective. All my life my parents had been splitting up. I lived in a no-man's-land between them, and the ground was pitted, scarred with ruts, useless. And yet no matter how hard

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they fought each other, they stuck together. He could not get away from my mother, somehow, nor she from him. So I couldn't look to my father for information on what a man was—nor could I look to my grandfather. Gramp was too nice a man. You should have seen him when he planted a tree.

"A ten-dollar hole for a two-bit seedling," he'd say. That was the way he dug, so as not to crowd the roots. He kept the little tree in water while he pried out any rocks that might be there, though our land was just as good as Creston soil, dirt that went ten feet down in that part of Montana, black as coal, rich as tar, fine as face powder. Gramp put the bare-root tree in and carefully, considerately even, sifted the soil around the roots, rubbing it to fine crumbs between his fingers. He packed the dirt in; he watered until the water pooled. Looking into my grandfather's eyes I would see the knowledge, tender and offhand, of the way roots took hold in the earth.

I saw no such knowledge in Stan's eyes. I watched him from behind my mother. I discovered what he had to sell.

"It's Bibles, isn't it?" I said.

"No fair." He put his hand across his heart and grinned at the two of us. He had seen my eyes flicker to the little gold cross in his lapel. "Something even better."

"What?" my mother asked.

"Spirit."

My mother turned and walked away. She had no time for conversion attempts. I was only intermittently religious, but I suppose I felt that I had to make up for her rudeness, and so I stayed a moment longer. I was wearing very short cutoff jeans and a little brown T-shirt, tight—old clothes for dirty work. I was supposed to help my mom clean out her hobby brooder house that afternoon, to set in new straw and wash down the galvanized feeders, to destroy the thick whorls of ground-spider cobwebs and shine the windows with vinegar and newspapers. All my stuff, rags and buckets, was scattered behind me on the steps. And, as I said, I was never all that religious.

"We'll be having a meeting tonight," he said. "I'm going to tell you where."

He always told in advance what he was going to say; that was the preaching habit in him. It made you wait and wonder in spite of yourself.

"Where?" I said finally.

As he told me the directions, how to get where the tent was pitched, as he spoke to me, looking full on with the whole intensity of his blue gaze, I was deciding that I would go, without anyone else in my family, to the fairground that evening. Just to study. Just to see.

I DROVE a small sledge and a tractor at the age of eleven, and a car back and forth into town, with my mother in the passenger seat, when I was fourteen. So I often went where I wanted to go. The storm had veered off. Disappointed, we watched rain drop across the valley. We got no more than a slash of moisture in the air, which dried before it fell. In town the streets were just on the edge of damp, but the air was still thin and dry. White moths fluttered in and out under the rolled flaps of the revival tent, but since the month of August was half spent, the mosquitoes were mainly gone. Too dry for them, too. Even though the tent was open-sided, the air within seemed close, compressed, and faintly salty with evaporated sweat. The space was three-quarters full of singing people, and I slipped into one of the rear rows. I sat on a gray metal folding chair, just sat there, keeping my eyes open and my mouth shut.

He was not the main speaker, I discovered, and I didn't see him until the one whom the others had come to hear finished a prayer. He called Stan to the front with a little preface. Stan was newly saved, endowed with a message from the Lord, and could play several musical instruments. We were to listen to what the Lord would reveal to us through Stan's lips. He took the stage. A white vest finished off his white suit, and a red-silk shirt with a pointed collar. He started talking. I can tell you what he said just about word for word, because after that night and long away into the next few years, sometimes four or five times in one day, I'd hear it over and over. You don't know preaching until you've heard Stan Anderson. You don't suffer with Christ, or fear loss of faith, a barbed wire ripped from your grasp, until you've heard it from Stan Anderson. You don't know subjection, the thorough happiness of letting go. You don't know how light and comforted you feel, how cherished.

I was too young to stand against it.

THE stars are the eyes of God, and they have been watching us from the beginning of the world. Do you think there isn't an eye for each of us? Go on and count. Go on and look in The Book and add up all the nouns and adverbs, as if somehow you'd grasp the meaning of what you held if you did. You can't. The understanding is in you or it isn't. You can hide from the stars by daylight, but at night, under all of them, so many, you are pierced by the sight and by the vision.

Get under the bed!

Get under the sheet!

I say to you, Stand up, and if you fall, fall forward!

I'm going to go out blazing. I'm going to go out like a light. I'm going to burn in glory. I say to you, Stand up!

And so there's one among them. You have heard Luce, Light, Lucifer, the Fallen Angel. You have seen it with your own eyes, and you didn't know he came upon you. In the night, and in his own disguises, like the hijacker of a planet, he fell out of the air, he fell out of the dark leaves, he fell out of the fragrance of a woman's body, he fell out of you and entered you as though he'd reached through the earth.

Reached his hand up and pulled you down.

Fell into you with a jerk.

Like a hangman's noose.

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Like nobody.

Like the slave of night.

Like you were coming home and all the lights were blazing and the ambulance sat out front in the driveway and you said, *Lord, which one?*

And the Lord said, *All of them.*

You, too, follow, follow, I'm pointing you down. In the sight of the stars and in the sight of the Son of Man. The grace is on me. Stand up, I say. *Stand.* Yes, and yes, I'm gonna scream, because I like it that way. Let yourself into the gate. Take it with you. In four years the earth will shake in its teeth.

Revelations. Face of the beast. In all fairness, in all fairness, let us quiet down and let us think.

Stan Anderson looked intently, quietly, evenly, at each person in the crowd and spoke to each one, proving things about the future that seemed complicated, like the way the Mideast had shaped up as such a trouble zone. How the Chinese armies were predicted in Tibet and that came true, and how they'll keep marching, moving, until they reach the Fertile Crescent. Stan Anderson told about the number. He slammed his forehead with his open hand and left a red mark. *There*, he yelled, gutshot, *there it will be scorched.* He was talking about the number of the beast, and said that they would take it from your Visa card, your Mastercard, your household insurance. That already, through these numbers, you are under the control of last things and you don't know it.

The Antichrist is among us.

He is the plastic in our wallets.

You want credit? Credit?

Then you'll burn for it, and you will starve. You'll eat sticks, you'll eat black bits of paper, your bills, and all the while you'll be screaming from the dark place, *Why the hell didn't I just pay cash?*

Because the number of the beast is a computerized number, and the computer is the bones, it is the guts, of the Antichrist, who is Lucifer, who is pure brain.

Pure brain got us to the moon, got us past the moon.

The voice of lonely humanity is in a space probe calling, *Anybody home? Anybody home out there?* The Antichrist will answer. The Antichrist is here, all around us in the tunnels and webs of radiance, in the microchips; the great mind of the Antichrist is fusing in a pattern, in a destiny, waking up nerve by nerve.

Serves us right. Don't it serve us right not to be saved?

It won't come easy. Not by waving a magic wand. You've got to close your eyes and hold out those little plastic cards.

Look at this!

He held a scissors high and turned it to every side so that the light gleamed off the blades.

The sword of Michael! Now I'm coming. I'm coming down the aisle. I'm coming with the sword that sets you free.

Stan Anderson started a hymn and walked down the rows of chairs, singing. Every person who held out a credit card he embraced, and then he plucked that card out of their fingers. He cut once, crosswise. Dedicated to the Lord! He cut again. He kept the song flowing, walked up and down the rows cutting, until the tough, trampled grass beneath the tent was littered with pieces of plastic. He came to me last of all, and noticed me, and smiled.

"You're too young to have established a line of credit," he said, "but I'm glad to see you here."

Then he stared at me, his eyes the blue of winter ice, cold in the warmth of his tanned blondness, so chilling I just melted.

"Stay," he said. "Stay afterward and join us in the trailer. We're going to pray over Ed's mother."

SO I did stay. It didn't sound like a courting invitation, but that was the way I thought of it at the time, and I was right. Ed was the advertised preacher, and his mother was a sick, sick woman. She lay flat and still on a couch at the front of the house trailer, where she just fit end to end. The air around her was dim, close with the smell of sweat-out medicine and what the others had cooked and eaten—hamburger, burnt onions, coffee. The table was pushed to one side, and chairs were wedged around the couch. Ed's mother, poor old dying woman, was covered with a white sheet that her breathing hardly moved. Her face was caved in, sunken around the mouth and cheeks. She looked to me like a bird fallen out of its nest before it feathered, her shut eyelids bulging blue, wrinkled, beating with tiny nerves. Her head was covered with white wisps of hair. Her hands, just at her chest, curled like little pale claws. Her nose was a large and waxen bone.

I drew up a chair, the farthest to the back of the eight or so people who had gathered. One by one they opened their mouths, rolled their eyes or closed them tight, and let the words fly out until they began to garble and the sounds from their mouths resembled some ancient, dizzying speech. At first I was so uncomfortable with all the strangeness, and even a little faint from the airlessness and smells, that I breathed in with shallow gulps and shut the language out. Gradually, slowly, it worked its way in anyway, and I began to *feel* its effect—not hear, not understand, not listen.

THE words are inside and outside of me, hanging in the air like small pottery triangles, broken and curved. But they are forming and crumbling so fast that I'm breathing dust, the sharp antibiotic bitterness, medicine, death, sweat. My eyes sting, and I'm starting to choke. All the blood goes out of my head and down along my arms into the ends of my fingers, and my hands feel swollen, twice as big as normal, like big puffed gloves. I get out of the chair and turn to leave, but he is there.

"Go on," he says. "Go on and touch her."

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The others have their hands on Ed's mother. They are touching her with one hand and praying, the other palm held high, blind, feeling for the spirit like an antenna. Stan pushes me, not by making any contact, just by inching up behind me so I feel the forcefulness and move. Two people make room, and then I am standing over Ed's mother. She is absolutely motionless, as though she were a corpse, except that her pinched mouth has turned down at the edges so that she frowns into her own dark unconsciousness.

I put my hands out, still huge, prickling. I am curious to see what will happen when I do touch her—if she'll respond. But when I place my hands on her stomach, low and soft, she makes no motion at all. Nothing flows from me, no healing powers. Instead I am filled with the rushing dark of what she suffers. It fills me suddenly, as water from a faucet brims a jug, and spills over.

This is when it happens.

I'm not stupid; I have never been stupid. I have pictures. I can get a picture in my head at any moment, focus it so brilliant and detailed that it seems real. That's what I do, what I started when my mom and dad first went for each other. When I heard them downstairs, I always knew a moment would come. One of them would scream, tearing through the stillness. It would rise up, that howl, and fill the house, and then one would come running. One would come and get me and hold me. It would be my mother, smelling of smoked chicken, rice, and coffee grounds. It would be my father, sweat-soured, scorched with cigarette smoke from the garage, bitter with the dust of his fields. Then I would be somewhere in no-man's-land, between them, and that was the unsafest place in the world. So I would leave it. I would go limp and enter my pictures.

I have a picture. I go into it right off when I touch Ed's mother, veering off her thin pain. Here's a grainy mountain, a range of deep-blue Missions hovering off the valley in the west. Their foothills are blue, strips of dark-blue flannel, and their tops are cloudy walls. The sun strikes through once, twice, a pink radiance that dazzles patterns into their faces so that they gleam back, moon-pocked. Watch them, watch close, Ed's mother, and they start to walk. I keep talking until I know she is watching too. She is dimming her lights, she is turning as thin as tissue under my hands. She is dying until she goes into my picture with me, goes in strong, goes in willingly. And once she is in the picture, she gains peace from it, gains the rock strength, the power.

I WAS young. I was younger than I had a right to be. I was drawn the way a deer is drawn into the halogen lamplight, curious and calm. Heart about to explode. I wasn't helpless, though, not me. I had pictures.

"Show me what you did," Stan said that night, once Ed's mother was resting calmly.

We went into the room at the Red Lion that was Stan's, all carpet and deodorizer. All flocked paper on the walls. Black-red. Gold. Hilarious. Stan lay down on the king-size bed and patted the broad space beside him in a curious, not sexual, way. I lay down there and closed my eyes.

"Show me Milwaukee," Stan whispered. I breathed deep and let out the hems of my thoughts. After a while, then, I got the heft of it, the green medians in June, the way you felt entering your favorite restaurant with a dinner reservation, hungry, knowing that within fifteen minutes German food would start to fill you, German bread, German beer, German schnitzel. I got the neighborhood where Stan had lived, the powdery stucco, the old-board rotting infrastructure and the back yard, all shattered sun and shade, leaves; got Stan's mother lying on the ground full-length in a red suit, asleep; got the back porch, full of suppressed heat; and got the june bugs razzing indomitable against the night screens. Got the smell of Stan's river, got the first-day-of-school smell, the chalk and wax, the cleaned-and-stored, paper-towel scent of Milwaukee schools in the beginning of September. Got the milk cartons, got the straws. Got Stan's brother, thin and wiry arms holding Stan down. Got Stan a hot-dog stand, a nickel bag of peanuts, thirst.

"No," Stan said. "No more."

He could feel it coming, though I avoided it. I steered away from the burning welts, the scissors, pinched nerves, the dead eye, the strap, the belt, the spike-heeled shoe, the razor, the boiling-hot spilled tapioca, the shards of glass, the knives, the chinked armor, the small sister, the small sister, the basement, anything underground.

"Enough." Stan turned to me.

He didn't know what he wanted to see, and I don't mean to imply that he would see the whole of my picture anyway. I would walk the edge of his picture, and he'd walk the edge of mine, get the crumbs, the drops of water that flew off when a bird shook its feathers. That's how much I got across, but that was all it took. When you share like that, the rest of the earth shuts. You are locked in, twisted close, braided, born.

He smoothed his hands across my hair and closed me against him, and then we shut the door to everything and everyone but us. He stood me next to the bed, took off my clothing piece by piece, and made me climax just by brushing me, slowly, here, there, just by barely touching me until he forced apart my legs and put his mouth on me hard. Stood up. He came into me without a sound. I cried out. He pushed harder and then withdrew. It took more than an hour, by the bedside clock. It took a long time. He held my wrists behind my back and forced me down onto the carpet. Then he bent over me and gently, fast and slow, helplessly, without end or beginning, he went in and out until I grew bored, until I wanted to sleep, until I moaned, until I cried out, until I wanted nothing else, until I wanted him the way I always would from then on, since that first dry summer.

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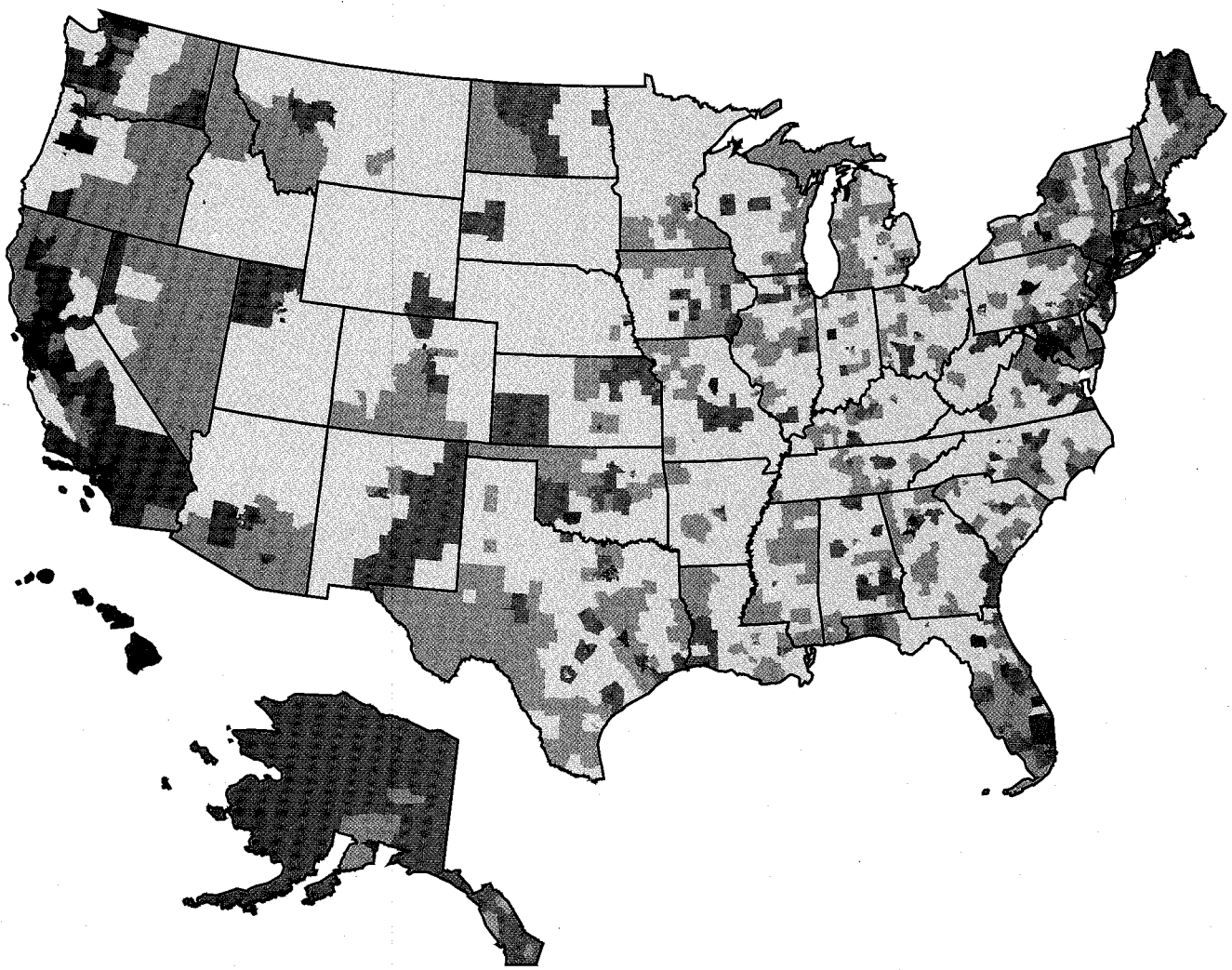
The Other Immigrants



PUBLIC attention has largely been focused on the influx of Hispanic immigrants to the United States, but non-Hispanic immigrants have accounted for about two thirds of all those entering the country legally of late.

The map above, broken into Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMAs), shows the settlement patterns of the non-Hispanic foreign-born—a primarily Asian group—who were among the nearly 10 million legal and illegal immigrants to enter the United States during the 1980s. The Philippines was the country of origin for the largest non-Hispanic group to enter, boosting the immigrant Filipino population to 1.4 million by 1990. At least half of those who have immigrated from Korea, Vietnam, China, and India have arrived since 1980.

Unexpected pockets of "other immigrants" include Lawton, Oklahoma, in Comanche County, where the German- and Korean-born wives and children of active and retired servicemen reside at or near Fort Sill Army Post. Today 10,500 of those who have retired from the Army and nearly 20,000 of their family members live within 100 miles of Fort Sill.

The "heartland" of southwest Kansas is another pocket, in part owing to Vietnamese and Laotian immigrants who found work during the 1980s in the meat-packing plants located there. And in Marathon County, Wisconsin, thousands of Southeast Asian refugees found new homes when church congregations and individuals sponsored their resettlement in the aftermath of the Vietnam War.

Non-Hispanic foreign-born immigrants arriving 1980–1990, percent per PUMA (each PUMA represents a population of 100,000 to 200,000)

- 0 to 0.41
- 0.42 to 1.06
- 1.07 to 2.45
- 2.46 to 25

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 Census of Population and Housing

In some rural areas foreign students account for much of the diversity. Tippecanoe County, in Indiana, for example, is home to Purdue University, where the number of foreign students, particularly from China and India, has grown steadily, to nearly 3,000 last year. —*Allan Reeder*

Map provided by the Consortium for International Earth Science Information Network

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Classical

Many symphony orchestras think that luring jazz, blues, and rock audiences is their salvation—but neither musicians nor listeners get what they expect at crossover concerts, the author learned from experience

by DAVID SCHIFF

IN a cubbyhole at the cramped offices of the Oregon Symphony, in Portland, a conductor, an orchestra manager, a fundraiser, and a composer awaited the arrival of a singer from the other side of the musical world—a former pop star we can call Rock Bottom. It was the beginning of September, just before the symphony season was scheduled to open, with a concert featuring the pianist André Watts. The goal of this meeting was to firm up plans for a December 3 concert designed to bring a new audience to the symphony. It was to be a crossover event, a category that attracts funding these days. A three-concert series, called "Nerve Endings," had been put together by the symphony's resident conductor, Murry Sidlin, with a theme of improvisation. There would be a jazz concert with the pianist Billy Taylor, a concert focusing on flamenco, and a collaboration between the symphony orchestra and Rock Bottom's band, with music to be composed by Bottom and a classical composer—me. Bottom and I had never met.

Preliminary conversations between Bottom and Tony Beadle, the orchestra's general manager, had raised some red flags. Bottom seemed less interested in improvisation than in showcasing his band. Beadle and Sidlin worried that his approach would imperil the grant from the Knight Foundation, which was underwriting the series. The unwritten agenda of the meeting was to get Bottom on board.

Bottom arrived ten minutes late and entered the room as if he knew he was walking into a booby trap. He looked forty-ish and darkly handsome, more presentable than the Afro-haired, gold-necklaced disco idol I had found on the cover of an album from the seventies. Sidlin laid out the theme of the concert and expressed his hope that we could reach a common goal. Beadle explained the terms of the Knight Foundation grant and the limits of the budget. Bottom listened sullenly. "I have a few questions," he began.

"First of all, I keep hearing this word 'collaboration.'" He glared across the room at me. "How is that supposed to happen?" Sidlin explained that he would like a piece demonstrating improvisation within different styles, including Baroque, Romantic, modern, and rock; I had written an outline for such a piece, he continued, which would alternate sections for the orchestra and the rock band. Bot-

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Appeal

tom looked around the room with an expression of impatient disbelief and then his face lit up. "I know what you want. You want to give a concert of contemporary music. I am a contemporary musician. Let me tell you what you need to do."

I had watched the term "music" become synonymous with "rock," at least in the weekly entertainment section of the Portland paper. But this was the first time I had heard a rock musician claim the present historical moment exclusively for himself. Bottom continued, an emerging mammal addressing dinosaurs.

"An audience today does not want to hear acoustic music. They are used to THX. They want the sound to come at them from every direction. They want it loud. An acoustic orchestra has no impact. To play contemporary music you have to mike every player in the orchestra and you need a sound engineer to control the mix. It's done on a computer. We do this in the studio all the time. I know the best guy in the business. Of course, we'll need extra rehearsal time for this.

"And you can't use your percussion section. Those guys just don't understand contemporary music. We will have to bring in a rock drummer. And a larger rhythm section. I already spoke to my record label, and I think they would be very interested in the project, if we do it right."

Bottom had turned the tables. He had seen the future and (unlike the Oregon Symphony) he had a recording contract. Of course the extra technical rehearsal, let alone a three-hour session for the band on the orchestra's nickel, was out of the question. But the symphony people seemed entranced. Improvisation became a side issue. Sidlin suggested that Bottom and I get together soon to plan our collaboration. Bottom said coldly that he would "think about that." Two days later, for unrelated reasons, the symphony musicians went out on strike. The orchestra canceled its André Watts concert, and the rest of the season was put on hold.

Classical Crisis

In the sensitive world of classical music a lot of people are convinced that the sky is falling. Newspaper articles describe the classical-music business in apocalyptic terms. Sales of classical CDs have slowed, strikes have closed down orchestras in Philadelphia, Atlanta, San Francisco, and Portland for weeks and months, and the number of music critics has declined (is this bad?). Legendary music managers, those gnomes of 57th Street, have shut their offices, and the public still hates modern music. It's not clear, though, whether classical music has already collided with the iceberg or is still steaming toward a fatal encounter.

The present crisis is actually a convergence of several trends: the supplanting of the old mom-and-pop music managers by big entertainment multinationals; the saturation of the recording market, now that CDs have put all the old wine of vintage recordings in new and cut-price bottles; the anti-high-culture stance affected by younger academics and journalists; and the collapse of music education in the public schools. Taken separately, these developments are no cause for alarm. Downsizing and internationalization are just business as usual in the nineties. The recording industry is resourceful in coming up with new technology that will make

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listeners buy the same performances again. Academic fads come and go. Even the apparent disappearance of music from the schools really signals a change from the old notion that music is for everyone to a concentration on educating the musically gifted—today soccer, not the saxophone, is for everyone.

Put these trends together, though, and they become an iceberg. Crossover between classical and nonclassical music and musicians is the lifeboat of the moment: opera stars like Dawn Upshaw and Bryn Terfel are recording Broadway ballads, Yo-Yo Ma is playing country fiddle, and orchestras are turning to jazz musicians like Chick Corea, Keith Jarrett, and Bobby McFerrin to put new life into classical repertory. Lincoln Center, following the success of its jazz program, has launched a program featuring popular song, a genre referred to by the program's director, Jonathan Schwartz, as "American classical music." These days nearly everything is "classical music" except classical music.

Orchestra players today are unionized employees, and their mentality falls somewhere between those of airline pilots and steelworkers.

Musicians' strikes and crossover concerts are nothing new. Strikes are a perennial part of an infrastructure in which virtually all orchestral players belong to the American Federation of Musicians. Crossover is at least as old as Paul Whiteman's 1924 "Experiment in Modern Music," which launched George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*. American orchestras cannot be accused of snubbing popular culture: nearly all of them devote a good part of their season to pops concerts. What is new is the widespread sense of doom. A few years ago orchestras were questioning their mission. Should they be more diverse? More educational? Today the question is simple survival. Political agendas are pursued only if they help balance the budget, and they rarely do.

It is difficult to create demand for an invisible product. Newspaper coverage of classical music is rapidly disappearing. In the Portland *Oregonian* the music section of the weekend arts-and-entertainment supplement is devoted to rock, blues, and jazz; classical music appears in a back-of-the-book section called "On Stage," where it competes for coverage with dance and theater. An editor told me that the only people who really care about classical reviews are performers and their managers, who use them for publicity. There is no classical music on commercial TV. A few cities still have commercial classical radio stations, but these are fading. An increasing number of National Public Radio

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stations, moreover, have turned to an all-news format with just an occasional classical-music slot. In Portland the NPR station fills the few hours between news programs with a mixture of classical, jazz, and ethnic tidbits, which I think of as Muzak for people with a college education. There is also a small classical station, which was once supported by the Portland public schools; when the school budget was cut, the station turned to the public for support, and its programs now come with tasteful announcements of sponsorship by local professionals such as dentists and lawyers. It's a very low-budget operation, yet it is the only local outlet for the broadcasts of the Metropolitan Opera and the Chicago Symphony. Our brave little station might be celebrated as a sign of the tenacity of classical music at the grassroots level. But these days it reminds me more of the pauper's grave where they dumped the body of Mozart.

Assembly-Line Artists

THE Oregon Symphony strike lasted eighteen days. The issues were wages, benefits, and working conditions, but, as in the strikes that would come later in the season around the country, it was really a battle of perceptions. Many people in the community characterized the players as spoiled children with no understanding of the realities of the cultural marketplace. The players, however, saw management as trying to get the most playing for the least money, and as having no interest in artistic standards. Conductors usually leave town during strikes, to avoid being identified with either side.

In Europe many orchestras are cooperatives; the players hire the conductor. But here the players are unionized employees, and their mentality falls somewhere between those of airline pilots and steelworkers. They view themselves as highly skilled professionals who have put in as many years of training as a lawyer or a doctor yet in effect are on an assembly line. The rituals of rehearsal and performance give them little sense of autonomy. Even though the era of the tyrant conductor is long gone, musicians do not choose the music they play, and have little input into musical interpretation. Rehearsals are timed to the second, starting at the stroke of ten in the morning and ending precisely at twelve-thirty, with a fifteen-minute break. In three or four rehearsals musicians must put together a concert program that may contain a work they have never played before. They are all quick studies, but the rigid constraints on rehearsal time create an emergency-room tension and a frustrating sense of artistic compromise. The players devote considerable time to practicing their parts and maintaining their instruments, and additional demands on their time by the orchestra can cut into this necessary preparation. Not even familiar repertory guarantees a more gracious style of music-making, because the season brings a series of guest conductors, each with a distinctive set of preferences, strengths, and weaknesses. Over the years players hone their skills of self-protection. They know that they have to perform well whether the conductor is a genius or a hack—and they know that the audience will credit a good performance to the conductor.

Players see their lack of power as an artistic problem, and yet the reaction of people outside the profession is that their attitude is somehow unartistic—and that they aren't taking into account the dwindling demand for their services. In fact musicians in major American orchestras, who number under 3,000, are in a unique position in the arts: they have guaranteed full-time employment and, after a few years, tenure until retirement. No dancer, actor, or visual artist can even aspire to this level of security, and orchestral players get little sympathy from other artists. But the players argue that such security is necessary for artistic reasons: an orchestra is a team, and it takes years of experience with one another and with the acoustics of the concert hall to learn to play as one instrument. Unlike dancers, orchestral players can continue to work throughout their lives without physical deterioration, gaining the benefit of years of experience with the repertory and with conductors. Few orchestral players feel the kind of awe and dependency toward a conductor that dancers feel toward a choreographer—who will cast them aside when they turn forty. Conductors come and go; the orchestra is for life.

Since the nineteenth century the musical world has been divided into two mutually dependent cultures, which we could label supply and demand. The supply culture defines and nurtures musical talent, and the demand culture connects that talent to a paying audience. The conservatory, the

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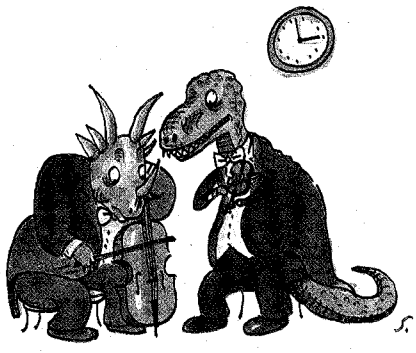
heart of the supply culture, is one of the last institutions to reward individuals strictly on the basis of talent. Most orchestral musicians were scholarship students at these great schools, earning their support not on the basis of need but at annual performances before juries. In this world talent succeeds: walk into a conservatory and ask students who is the best trumpet player, and you will be surprised by the unanimity of the response.

In the conservatory players go far beyond mastering the mechanics of their instruments and learning to play the notes on the page. They learn to find the music in those notes—to shape a phrase, to color a tone. And they learn to do this in a range of musical styles, from the Baroque to the modern. There are also many things they don't learn. Classical musicians do not study improvisation, and they do not routinely learn to play jazz or pop music or rock. In short, they leave the conservatory knowing nothing about "contemporary music" in the sense Bottom gave the term—even though their future livelihood may call upon them to play many kinds of music beyond the classical repertory.

Outside is where the world of capitalism begins. A handful of musicians—the Perlmans and Pavarottis—can make in one night what the average orchestral player earns in a year. Several thousand others—either freelancers (known as "gig pigs") putting together a living with pickup groups, teaching, and commercial work, or the musicians in the country's twenty-seven full-time orchestras—support themselves as musicians, earning incomes that place them in the middle-class professions. For everyone else the choice is between keeping your day job and leaving music as an avocation, and living a monastic existence playing in subways and on street corners. Plenty of dancers, actors, and jazz musicians effectively take vows of poverty, but for classical musicians that would represent an admission of failure.

The music world has its ways of gilding ugly economic realities. The dependence on patrons creates the *folie à deux* found everywhere in the arts: the rich pretend they are artists, and artists pretend they are rich. Murry Sidlin sprang the invitation to participate in his Knight Foundation project on me over coffee in Aspen, where he teaches conducting at the summer music school—one of the most prestigious and glorious settings in the music world. Aspiring musicians come to Aspen from all over the world to study with the top teachers in the business and to brush against the greatness of the star soloists and globe-trotting conductors who fly in and out or hole up in the $500-a-night resorts. Everyone dreams of sudden success. Few of the students or teachers can afford the fancy condos and restaurants that cater to a Hollywood clientele during ski season and are still expensive in the summer. As usual in the music world, artists pay for the privilege of perfecting their art in the company of great mentors and peers. Then they go home and figure out how to pay off their credit cards.

The orchestra has to compete for younger audiences, and in a city whose artistic preferences are countercultural, it's a hard sell.



Trying to Afford Year-Round Concerts

AFTER a great deal of public acrimony the Oregon Symphony musicians gained what looked like a Pyrrhic victory and went back to work, though with a large residue of bad feeling. Unlike some of the members of the first-rank orchestras that would strike later in the season, the players in Portland make modest salaries, comparable, in most cases, to those of public school teachers—and this in a city where the cost of housing has nearly doubled in the past five years. But pay was only one of the issues. The symphony now performs a given concert three times: Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday. For years management has wanted to drop the Tuesday concert and begin the series on Saturday night. This would involve changes in the rehearsal schedule, and some of the musicians, who supplement their incomes with teaching and other jobs, opposed the change. They found little sympathy: "Didn't anyone tell them they were in show business?" was a common reaction. The players, who finally accepted the change in schedule, know they are in show business—all too well. Nearly half their programs are pops concerts, "family" concerts, or miscellaneous "specials"—single performances allotted even less rehearsal time than the regular programs. I found little trace of snobbery in the players' view of these concerts; they respect many of the pop performers. But backing up a Broadway tunesmith or sight-reading arrangements of golden oldies does little to sustain the skills they mastered in the conservatory. Less qualified musicians and, even worse, synthesizers and computers could do the job just as well.

After the strike ended, Tony Beadle set up the second meeting with Rock Bottom to nail down our collaboration. The concert was now seven weeks away. I had only a vague sense of what form my piece would take. Sidlin had

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asked me to create some kind of framework—we would not even call it a composition—for different styles of improvisation. I had the idea of a theme that could be played in all the different styles, and I wrote a short tune based on the chord changes of "Hit the Road, Jack." When, at our second meeting, I played the tune for Bottom, he rolled his eyes. Steam began to emerge from his ears when Sidlin told him that he thought my piece should be played twice, so that the audience could hear how the improvised sections would differ by performance. "I have to think about it," Bottom said as he made a fast exit. I assumed the project was dead. A week later Beadle called me to say that Bottom had fallen out of the program—and they had found me a new collaborator, Curtis Salgado, a blues singer and harmonica player with a loyal local following. The concert was less than six weeks away.

The ambitions for the concert were as much financial as artistic. As with most American orchestras, the conductor, or music director, of the Oregon Symphony is responsible for artistic quality, and the board is responsible for fiscal balance. The executive director is the bridge between these two and between the orchestra and its players. He has to build support on the board for the artistic mission while keeping the music director's dreams in line with the board's ability to raise funds. And he must keep expenses as low as possible—which puts him on a collision course with the musicians, whose wages are the symphony's largest and least flexible budget item.

Until the arrival of the music director James DePreist, in 1980, Portland's orchestra was a part-time operation. It shared the cavernous civic auditorium with the Portland Opera and an array of Broadway road shows, and it rehearsed in the evening. Because evening rehearsals conflicted with other uses of the hall, the orchestra could not rehearse onstage. DePreist insisted that the symphony find its own home, so that it could rehearse during the day on its own stage. The city's grandest movie palace was transformed into the Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall, with the usual mixed results of such a makeover: glamorous public spaces and mediocre acoustics.

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The symphony's expansive ambitions were typical of the era; unlike many similar orchestras in middle-sized cities, however, the Oregon Symphony made a successful (or at least an apparently successful) transition from part time to full time.

The switch from evening to day rehearsals changed the relationship between the orchestra and its players. The orchestra now attained "major" status, a prestigious ranking that it knew at the time it could barely afford. The symphony was now the principal employer of its musicians, and had to provide them with a year-round living wage. Financial security seemed insidiously to become a higher priority for the musicians than either artistic accomplishment or the orchestra's fiscal balance, and avoiding risks became an end in itself. The forty-two-week season locked the orchestra and the musicians' union in a costly embrace of mutual dependency—a marriage that has sunk many orchestras around the country. The alternative to the year-round contract was now no orchestra at all, which has come to pass in Sacramento and San Diego. The idea that every middle-sized American city deserves a "major" orchestra has proved as seductive—and as untenable—as the dream that every American city should support a major-league baseball team.

Don Roth, the executive director of the Oregon Symphony, told me late last year that the orchestra is still about 10 percent shy, financially speaking, of being able to shoulder the burden of a forty-two-week season. Its budget rose 40 percent when it went full time. Last year the orchestra's budget was $10.5 million, of which half came from ticket sales and half from private and corporate gifts and grants. "The old wisdom was that the way to improve your reputation was to make recordings and take the orchestra to Carnegie Hall or Europe," Roth told me. "But these are terribly expensive projects that do not build your support at home. If the record critics love you but the city doesn't know what you're doing, you'll go under in no time." The symphony made five well-reviewed records a number of years ago—and never recouped its expenses for rehearsal time, which a record company never pays. It has not recorded since. "The major reason to make a recording," Roth told me, "is to give the orchestra a chance to work at its highest level, beyond what is possible during the season." And, in fact, many orchestras pay *all* the expenses, in effect making vanity recordings.

The greatest worry is ticket sales. The core audience for classical music is small and aging. The orchestra has to compete with other cultural institutions for the younger and more marginal audience, and in a city whose artistic preferences are countercultural, it's a hard sell. I was surprised to learn that almost all the pops concerts last season sold out, to an audience

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GOLDEN BOUGH: THE FEATHER PALM

as if as if as if a hiss, a swish of
fake, of fraud, fraudulent
among the genuine
but why green should be genuine, and this other
this bleached, this platinum, this gold
oh, I can be plain, I can be
plain green in the slippery sunlight, the oily—
like an extra limb, like a fetish
attached to the tree, *Cocos plumosa*, the feather
palm, queen of queens, like a fetish
a golden dildo the la-di-la
flies and wasps and bees smear their
mouths and eyes with spangled, with vulgar
with not at all good taste like those beaded
curtains hung up as room dividers
from a distance peroxide and honey up loud
a xanthous, a luteolous, a gilded, auric
screech, who said the past
was chaste, was not this cheap
aroma that whooshes from the flowers
bunched in fascicles, each
petaled gold rolled in bundles,
but already starting to
brown at the bend and flank
where the hum, the drone, the whir
what smell
holds them there, sucking, by mouth
fastening and lapping
bits of gold, bits of garish,
as if the branch
like a breast flowing its slow gaudy flow
and all the bees with their laughing gear
pushed out ready to diddle
the dingle-dangle, the ding-dong, dingus
and wouldn't I
for days on end like the flies
mucked with gold, guzzling
fumbling the golden lather, the plush
swaying back and forth, to
be lifted like an aroma

—SUSAN MITCHELL

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A Silent Disaster in North Korea

Slow, chronic starvation on a massive scale

Photo: World Food Programme/UN

Hundreds of children dead of starvation

Hospitals and schools nearly empty

Factories shut down

Trees stripped bare, people reduced to eating bark, wood pulp, ground stalks...

(Observations by United Nations officials)

"The twenty-three million people of North Korea are not our enemies, whatever one may think of the regime that governs them. It is imperative that Americans respond to this campaign for food aid, on the scale of previous aid to Somalia ($330 million) and other famine zones."

Bruce Cumings, Korea Expert and Author, Northwestern University

Severe floods in 1995 and 1996 devastated crops, housing, and irrigation systems in North Korea. Economic isolation means there is little foreign exchange with which to buy food on the world market. Public food rationing has distributed the shortages fairly evenly across the population, but for months rations have been only half a bowl of rice per day.

And the disaster remains silent. Few pictures flash across the international media. So we appeal to you.

What you can do

- Make a contribution to the AFSC Korea Relief Fund. Donated money is used to purchase food and support food production in North Korea. The distribution of food aid is monitored by UN World Food Programme staff to insure it reaches those who are hungry.
- Urge the Clinton Administration to give $100 million. A starving child knows no politics.

American Friends Service Committee • Korea Relief Fund
1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102 • Call toll free 1-888-588-AFSC

- ☐ My contribution is enclosed
- ☐ $250 will buy one ton of rice and feed 75 people for one month
- ☐ $125 will provide two weeks of food for 100 children
- ☐ $60 will feed six families for one month
- ☐ $20 will feed two families for one month

Please make checks payable to AFSC

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Credit Card No. _____

Exp.date _____

TAM97

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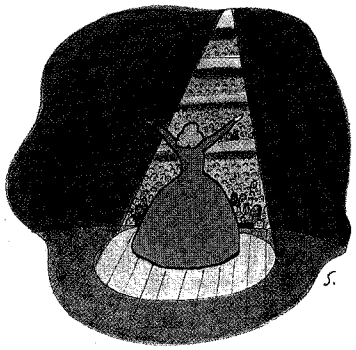
even older than the classical subscribers, while the classical series averaged ticket sales of 80 percent—300 empty seats per concert. Either the orchestra is giving too many classical concerts or it must do a better job of marketing them. Three years ago the symphony named Sidlin resident conductor to deal with the problem of audience development and to fill a gap in the repertory between classical and pops.

Sidlin's plan for our concert was dizzyingly utopian. Half the program was unfamiliar twentieth-century works—more than enough to frighten off regular subscribers. The theme was not crossover but improvisation. Sidlin included Debussy's *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun* as an example of a piece that sounds improvised even though it is fully composed, and also Ives's *The Unanswered Question*, in which the music of three instrumental groups is written out but their coordination is approximate. He also included free-form pieces by R. Murray Schafer and Martin Bresnick alongside numbers by Curtis Salgado's band and my piece, which I had decided to name *Bridge City*. The only concession to the audience (and to the players, who would have to learn several new scores) was Leonard Bernstein's Overture to *Candide*, which would get the concert off to a spirited start even if it had nothing to do with improvisation.



The Portland Opera, which sells out most performances, markets nearly every opera as a "night of passion and romance"—a bodice-ripper.

A few days after it hired Salgado, the symphony began to advertise the concert on the radio as a blues event. The spots did not mention the classical works. Further to entice jazz and blues fans, the ads said that ticket stubs would permit entry after the concert to a jazz club down the street, where the legendary jazz bass player Leroy Vinegar would be performing. Portland has an abundance of mostly white blues bands that play in bars and clubs, give free concerts in the parks during the summer, and occasionally open for traveling celebrities such as B. B. King and Kenny G. I'm not sure how much the symphony marketers knew about the demographics of the blues audience, other than that it falls into the thirty- to forty-something generation that rarely buys symphony tickets. Blues fans in Portland, a guitarist friend of mine explained, fall into three groups: "Lesbians, yuppies who want to get down and dirty, and blue-collar guys who really *are* down and dirty."

Whatever the potential might be for symphony sales to these groups, the marketing strategy reflected the conventional wisdom about how to sell crossover: the orchestra crosses down, and the audience crosses up. It's an attitude that insults both players and listeners. The orchestra is made to feel that the kind of music it plays best is unsellable, and the audience soon figures out that the ads are a bait-and-switch ploy. The marketing strategy leaves out many other potential concertgoers: modern-dance performances and several repertory theaters attract audiences that are younger than those at the symphony, though equally well educated and affluent. The Knight concert's improvisatory theme and eclectic works might have piqued their interest.

Marketing is where the tension between supply and demand cultures becomes visible. My own aversion to the ads reflects vanity—in my dreams the ads gave me top billing—and also my position as a conservatory-trained composer, a product of the supply culture. Many of the people who come to the Oregon Symphony (as well as most who don't) have little knowledge of the orchestral repertory, or even of the names of the famous soloists, and getting them into the hall requires different, often devious approaches. The symphony sells out an annual "Mozart 'til Midnight" concert on the basis of its title alone, which implies a nice, safe evening out to couples weary of violence-filled movies. (Four hours of under-rehearsed Mozart is a numbing experience, though—classical in all the worst ways.) The Portland Opera, which sells out almost all its performances, markets nearly every opera as a bodice-ripper: "Enjoy a night of passion and romance." But the audience arriving for a night of romance and passion would more likely be fulfilled by *Miss Saigon* than by *Tristan and Isolde*.

Showtime

SALGADO and his musicians arrived late for the first rehearsal. "The band is in culture shock," the orchestra drummer behind me muttered. A 10:00 A.M. rehearsal is cruel and unusual punishment for musicians who normally begin work at 9:00 P.M., and no one had told them about the stopwatch discipline of rehearsal time. The orchestra's time is tightly structured by the demands of its schedule and the horrifying prospect of running into overtime. A band is used to taking a set or two just to warm up. A larger problem was the alternation of sections for orchestra and band—a device I had hoped would make the piece easier to perform. But orchestras are used to coming in on cue, and blues bands are not. Sidlin would give the band a down-

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beat and nothing would happen. We got through the piece twice. "It'll be great," Sidlin assured me. I needed assurance.

The next morning—the day of the concert—the orchestra ran through the program in reverse order, *Bridge City* first. The band arrived on time, but its players settled into a completely different groove from the one of the day before—a nice groove, actually, but the change was a conductor's nightmare. Salgado played a mournful harmonica solo that just about broke my heart. The piece still didn't flow, but it was beginning to have a mood. The remaining questions were how long the band should be allowed to play and whether the piece should be performed once or twice. If Sidlin limited the performance to fifteen minutes or so, the band might never find its groove; but if he let the band stretch out, the piece could easily last twenty-five minutes. Two such performances would put the orchestra into overtime and wipe out the budget.

"Nerve Endings" had no glitz and no high tech. For two numbers the orchestra tried to use what educators call visual aids, with a slide projector that looked just like the one we had in junior high school. The players dressed down: the women nicely, in colorful dresses, the men awkwardly, mixing their usual tux tops with jeans. A jazz trio played in the upper lobby, and there were free refreshments to make it more like a happy hour than a concert. The program notes had Sidlin's pun-filled addenda (Ives is "Thoreau-ly transcendental") scribbled over the printed text. Before each number Sidlin kibbitzed with the audience and musicians, walking around the orchestra with a mike, Phil Donahue–style.

The audience seemed relieved when the band came onstage to play two numbers by itself. Unlike the orchestra, the band dressed up: "We faked the orchestra out," Salgado announced, and the audience cheered. Despite the warm recep-

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tion it got, however, the five-piece band seemed ill at ease on the huge, mostly empty stage. It played the way it would in a club, but achieving the intimacy of the blues in the movie-palace setting was hard, and it was harder still to put over Salgado's act of a white man singing like a black—the particular charm of his singing. Just as Salgado began to figure out how to work the chemistry of the hall, his set was over.

Salgado came back after intermission for our "collaboration"—a word whose meaning still eluded us. Sidlin gave the work almost no introductory shtick, perhaps because he was worried about time. When the band came in, the groove was different from that of either of the rehearsals; the wonderful harmonica solo of the morning rehearsal must have gotten lost in stage fright. Despite the glitches and a few bumpy transitions, the piece did not fall apart. Sidlin asked the audience if they wanted to hear it again. Fortunately, they clapped. This time the piece was a little more relaxed, with better transitions—and the concert finished a safe five minutes before overtime.

Some of the blues fans I talked to afterward were disappointed that Salgado had not played more. College students, who get talked at all day, resented the amount of chat between pieces. But audience members in the thirty-to-fifty range, who said they rarely go to the symphony because they find the atmosphere stuffy, told me they loved the informality of the concert and appreciated the way Sidlin lightened the mood and informed them about the music. Several told me that they would go to the symphony more often if concerts followed this format. If their opinion is statistically significant, it's an easy fix for orchestras: just add an opening monologue and the sky won't fall—at least not this year.

The symphony conducted its own audience survey, and it confirmed my doubts about the marketing campaign's mixed messages. The ads did attract blues fans, many of whom had never attended the symphony before. The people interviewed expressed stereotypical fears about the stuffiness of a classical concert, and evinced no interest at all in the classical pieces on the program—least of all mine, in which they had assumed the orchestra would simply back up the band. The audience was told to expect a blues concert, and when the band it came to hear played only two numbers, no amount of "outreach" could assuage its understandable disappointment.

Niche Marketing

As a composer, I remain a creature of the classical-music world, like the orchestral players. The orchestra is a special world: why shouldn't it remain so? Crossover may be a dangerous double fantasy. For populists it proves that classical music is dead; for orchestras it feeds the self-defeating notion that they can compete with popular music only by disguising the differences that separate the worlds of classical and popular music.

In a recent article Paul Griffiths, a music critic for *The New York Times*, claimed that orchestras will become like art museums, attracting audiences to the classics and also to contemporary art. I disagree with the analogy. Contemporary composers often complain that the repertory has been frozen—and has frozen them out. But they don't notice that the orchestra itself has been frozen in ways that make it irrelevant to most "contemporary" music. In technology and temperament the orchestra does remain a museum, but one for the music of what historians call the long nineteenth century: 1789 to 1914. Orchestras are trained to preserve a great collection of masterpieces from Haydn to Mahler, and the only music written after that to achieve repertory status has been works that remain true to that tradition. To play the technical peaks of this "modern" repertory—the Strauss tone poems, the orchestral works of Debussy and Ravel—requires a permanent ensemble of the finest musicians. As even this repertory becomes distant from contemporary life, the question will arise not whether such orchestras should exist but how many the world is willing to pay for.

The "major" orchestra with a forty-week contract was a product of bureaucratic thinking, spawned by the deceptively steady help of the National Endowment for the Arts. From the point of view of a federal agency, full-time status became a measure of cultural progress. Most orchestras turned not into better museums but into department stores just like the ones that have gone out of business in most American cities. In the era of niche marketing specialty stores have replaced the big store, and they provide an alternative musical model that symphonies are considering. Some orchestra managers have floated the idea of an "extended orchestral community," which would include chamber ensembles, contemporary-music specialists, and educational activities. I think this is the wrong direction, and such an approach implies a view of the symphony orchestra as a cross between a public utility and a social-welfare agency. One result of such a mega-orchestra would be more-frequent mega-strikes.

A smaller and less certain future might remind the classical-music world of its first principles. A few years ago I saw a movie of Nadia Boulanger teaching a class. It wasn't a real class but a simulation for some American cultural TV of the fifties. In her terrifying, gaunt way Boulanger looked into her students' very souls and said, "You must take risks! If you don't take risks, you should just stay in your room. You should stay in your bed. You should die!" In the world of classical orchestras taking risks would mean letting go of the security-blanket mentality that constrains negotiations over contracts, rehearsals, and concerts. The riskiest move of all, though, would be the proud defense of the orchestra's own traditions and repertory against forces that view symphony orchestras with neither respect nor understanding. If orchestras do not take that risk, perhaps they deserve to die.

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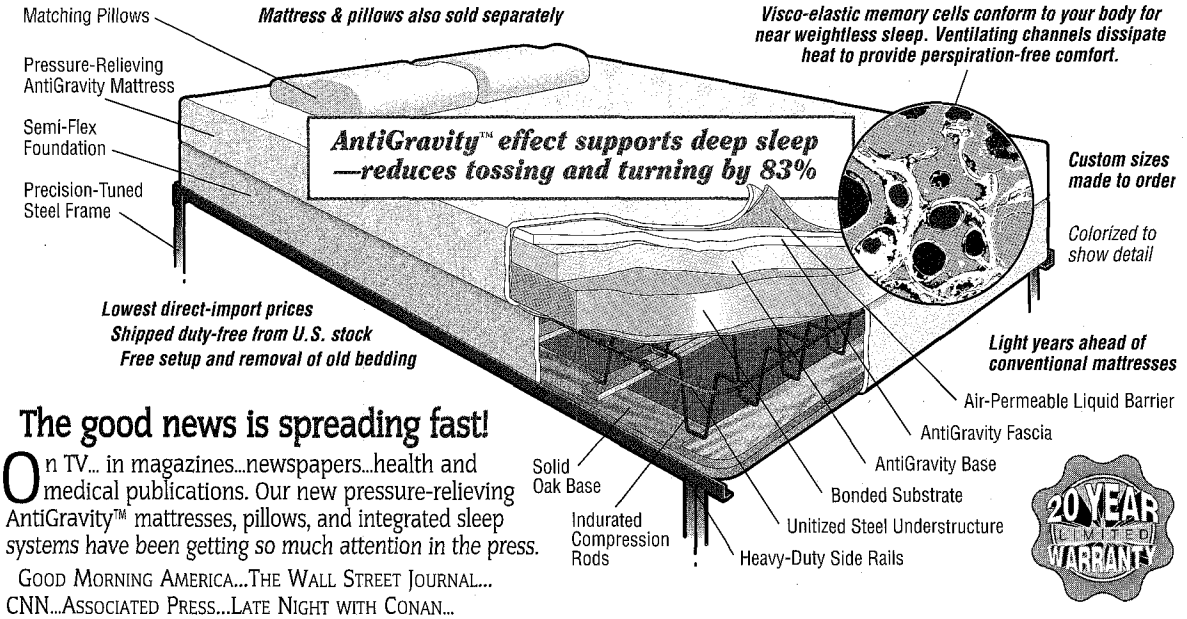

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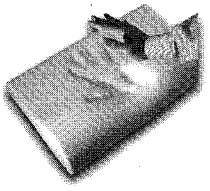

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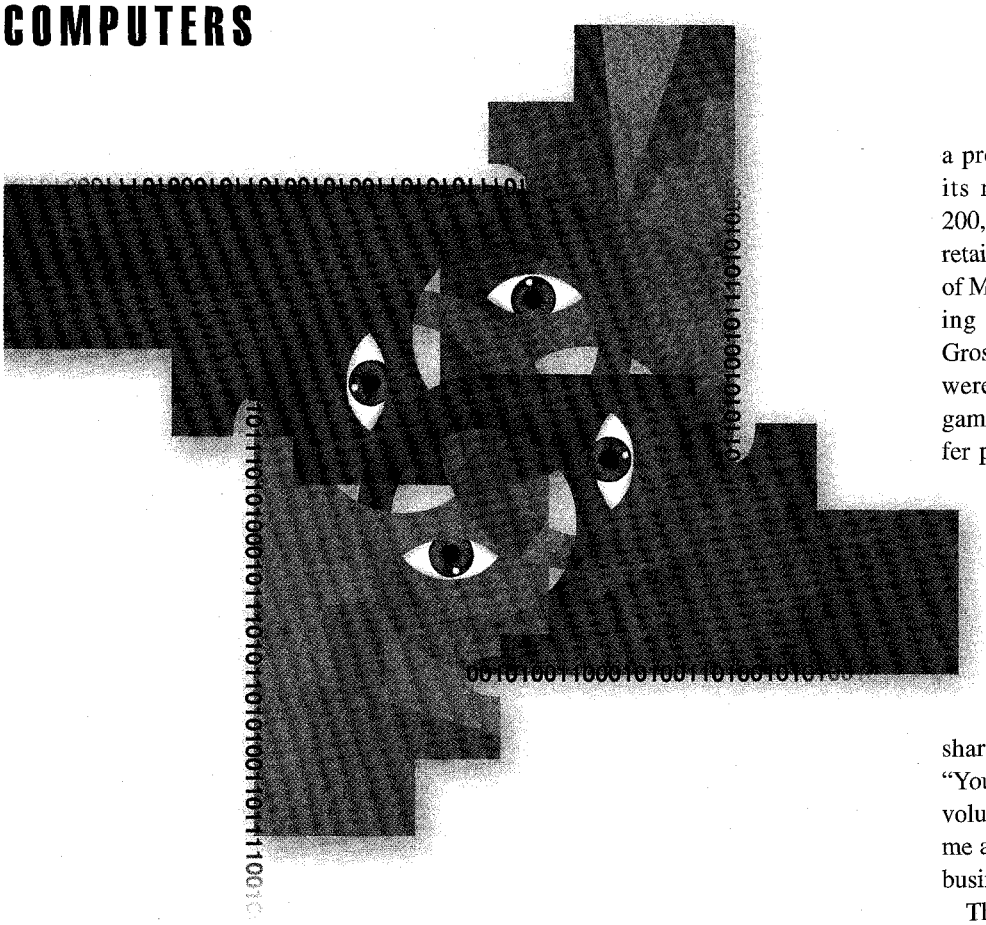

Zoot!

A new software program available on the Internet shows the usefulness and flexibility of shareware

by James Fallows

THE wave of software standardization led by Microsoft products like Windows and Word has made computers simpler to use than they once were. It is easier now than it was a decade ago to sit down at any machine, anywhere, and have an idea of how to make it go. But it is harder for a software developer to introduce a genuinely new approach to word processing, data management, or any other established function. And it is much harder for a company even to keep a program on the market if another product, especially one from Microsoft, seems likely to become the standard in that field.

Of course, I may be biased, since so many of the programs I consider most valuable have been driven from the market through this all-or-nothing form of competition. I still use several of these programs—Symantec's GrandView for making outlines, Lotus's Magellan for handling files, Lotus's Agenda for organizing certain kinds of research data—even though they have not been sold for years and, as holdovers from the DOS era, are increasingly awkward to run on current operating systems like Windows 95 and Windows NT. My bleak consolation is knowing that people who have used and loved the Apple Macintosh have more to complain about than I do, as the steady pressure toward Windows-based standardization has come to threaten the very existence of the Macintosh and its innovative programs.

Fortunately, there is an alternative to the dominance of big programs from the few major software houses: "shareware." Even substantial revenues can seem unsatisfactory to a large firm if a program is not destined to dominate its market niche. Lotus sold roughly 200,000 copies of Agenda (at an average retail price of $195) and 500,000 copies of Magellan (around $50) before canceling each of them in the early 1990s. Gross sales of about $64 million, that is, were not enough to keep Lotus in the game. But for the smaller firms that offer programs for the shareware market (and, even more, for software developers working from home offices), just a small fraction of these "disappointing" sales would mean huge success. "A benefit of being a small company is that you can afford to give your products a very long life-span," one shareware developer recently told me. "You don't need to maintain a huge sales volume to keep the product going. Give me a hundred thousand users and I'm in business for life."

The speaker was Tom Davis, a thirty-one-year-old self-taught computer programmer who until four years ago lived in New York and worked in advertising. Then he and his wife moved to Vermont, where he set up a one-man company and began writing a program to do the things he wished other programs would do. His program is called Zoot, and it illustrates both the commercial and the technical possibilities of the shareware approach.

Shareware operates on the principle of a free trial period followed by a paid "registration." To get a free copy of Zoot, for instance, you go to Davis's site on the Internet (http://www.zootsoftware.com) and download it. (The file is 2.8 megabytes in size and takes about twenty-five minutes to download with a 28.8-kilobits-per-second connection. It also comes on diskettes: send $5.00 to cover shipping and handling. You can reach Davis by phone at 802-453-6474, by E-mail at info@zootsoftware.com, or by mail at 170 West Hill Road, Lincoln, VT 05443. Zoot will run under Windows 3.1, Windows 95, and OS/2.) You can use the program, with all its functions, free for thirty days. Then, if you are satisfied, you register your copy of Zoot by sending Davis a check for $79. He will send you back program diskettes plus a registration code that will keep Zoot functioning

Illustration by Joyce Hesselberth

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indefinitely. If you don't register, Zoot still functions indefinitely, but with flashing "nag screens" that ask you for payment more and more frequently.

For the shareware developer the advantage of this business model is its low fixed costs. Davis says that once he has done the work of writing the program, his only continuing expenses are postage, diskettes, and online accounts—no manuals to print, no advertising, no fancy packaging or inventory. If he sells even 1,000 copies a year, the business is a roaring success and keeps him from needing to find a day job. The Internet is the crucial innovation that makes this model possible, because it gets word of the program's existence to potential purchasers—who can in turn seek out the Web site and get the program without incurring distribution costs for its creator. For the user the advantage of shareware is not simply the free trial period but also the chance to get a program tailored to a more specific niche than is attractive to mass-market software houses.

THE niche for which Zoot was designed is people who have ever-larger amounts of data flowing into, and being stored on, their computers but are frustrated with current means of sorting and retrieving it. When Davis offered an early version of the program, he called it InfoSnatch. Last year he changed the name to Zoot, in homage to Frank Zappa and his song "Zoot Allures." (Davis says he likes to listen to Zappa's music while writing program code.) "Zoot" sounds artier than "InfoSnatch," but the original name got across the idea of the program. It is an unusually effective tool for snatching information as it arrives—in E-mail messages, from Web sites, from online discussion forums or "newsgroups," from any other Windows-based research source—and then snatching again just the parts you want, when you want them, wherever they may be on your hard drive.

The way the system works is easier to demonstrate on a screen than to explain—something that is true of most programs that do something new and unusual. Its essential elements are these.

• Zoot makes it very easy to bring in the data you want to store, either in bulk or in selected excerpts. You can set up the program to organize text automatically as it is imported: for instance, it can take each day's harvest of CompuServe forum messages, or Internet newsgroup discussions, or material from online newspapers and magazines, and then sort the items according to author or subject. This makes it easy to skim through the files later and keep only the ones you want. Even handier is the way Zoot uses the "clipboard" function of Windows operating systems. Whenever you see a passage of text, of any length, that you'd like to save, whether it is on a Web page or in a paragraph of E-mail or in a research document you have called to the screen, you highlight it and copy it to the Windows clipboard. Zoot can then automatically save it as a note in a Zoot reference file. According to your preference, you can assign it a name and subject at the time you're collecting it, or you can have the program automatically subcategorize it based on its content. (For example, when you are clipping a bunch of Internet references to current movies, you can tell Zoot to put all the comments about Brad Pitt in one place and all those about Australian films in another.) The program can create a title for each note, based on its first line or other content, or it can ask you for a descriptive title each time it stores a note.

• When you have a general idea of what you will be looking for in the future, Zoot makes it easy to set up elaborate systems for automatically classifying and sorting data. You can specify that E-mail from people you hate be automatically discarded, while mail from your family is to go into an "urgent" category. You can set elaborate conditions, based on phrases that appear in the information you store—"Antarctic ice shelf," "European Union"—or on how recently you saved it or whether you would like to be reminded to take action on the item after a certain number of days. To those who have used Lotus's innovative but doomed Agenda, these features will sound familiar. That is because Zoot is the first program to match and in some ways exceed Agenda's artificial-intelligence ability to sort data. Like Agenda, Zoot applies the principle of "inheritance": if you have information about restaurants in Paris and Lyons and Marseilles, the information will also show up when you ask to see a list of all restaurants in France. That the part is contained in the whole sounds rudimentary, but it is

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foreign to the way many computerized information managers operate.

• For the even larger number of occasions when you don't yet know what you will ultimately need, Zoot offers an amazing variety of after-the-fact searching tools. Tom Davis says that he originally designed the program to help him find data he had stored somewhere but could not easily locate. He was frustrated with conventional search programs that ask for a word or phrase, produce a list of all files in which the word appears, and then force you to open the files one by one to see which you need. Davis created instead an ingenious system of "abstract searches." You specify the word or phrase you are looking for, or the Boolean condition ("Mexican food NOT enchiladas"), and Zoot produces a set of "abstracts." These are passages of text, which can be from fifty to 4,500 words long, that contain the phrase you are looking for, taken from relevant files. You don't have to open any of the files—but if you click on the file name listed at the beginning of an abstract, Zoot takes you there. Davis has built in many other high-speed, high-convenience tools for searching within Zoot files and the hard drive as a whole.

In countless other ways the program displays elegance of design. The effect is like finding a seat-warmer in a Mercedes or discovering that the hidden surfaces of a Lexus are painted as carefully as the outside. When you are checking Internet sites or copying E-mail messages or Web-site information to the clipboard, Zoot can unobtrusively store every address you encounter. The program can automatically strip out all the annoying "header" information that makes a one-sentence E-mail message take up unreasonable amounts of disk storage space ("Received: from mother.com . . . by son.mail.net [NTMail 3.02.13] with ESMTP" and so on). Some people love using a mouse; some, including me, hate it. Zoot works with almost equal ease either way. Like every other first-rate program, Zoot includes programming tools you don't have to use—but ones you can use when you become familiar enough with the program to want to tune it exactly to your tastes. For example, you can set it up to check for E-mail or Internet information downloaded to your hard drive, automatically classify information it finds that fits your criteria, and then discard, copy, or store the original material. I have used evolving versions of Zoot for more than a year. It has never crashed, but it makes automatic backups of its data in case some other program causes a system crash. Davis continues to revise and improve the program, and posts free updates on the Internet every month or two. Zoot has changed more dramatically in the past two years than Windows has in ten.

ZOOT bears a number of zany touches, of the sort that were common in the early, renegade days of software but that are rare in today's corporatized world. The program first caught my attention when Sean Fosmire, a lawyer and an online friend I have never met, quoted part of its help files in a CompuServe discussion. This help item concerned a clipboardlike function called the Zooter, and it read, "When you zoot information—actually say the word 'zoot' out loud so your co-workers can hear you. Soon they will admire and respect you." Davis says that he builds surprises into his help files as a way of avoiding insanity during the tedious work of writing them. This, he says, is "like writing a note for the kids to do the dishes, but you have to take them through it step by step: 'Put the soap on the sponge . . .'" The help files and program instructions are exceptionally lucid and interesting—no doubt the reason they were so hard to write. Davis says that when he is trying to solve a programming problem, he wakes up at odd hours to go to the computer and barely sleeps; his brain keeps grinding through solutions even when he nods off.

"The past few years have been kind of a blur," Davis told me last spring, after completing a major revision of Zoot and a huge new set of help files. "If you stop programming even for a couple of weeks, you start to lose your abilities, like a foreign language. At the moment, I know every piece of the program, all the variables. There is so much information to keep track of that if you don't keep doing it, you just lose track of what is where. That is why I have been so quick to keep developing new versions while I'm at the top of my game." Zoot takes time to learn, and you have to be at least a little interested in computers to want to try. I love the idea of it, I use it constantly, and I am glad that shareware made it possible.

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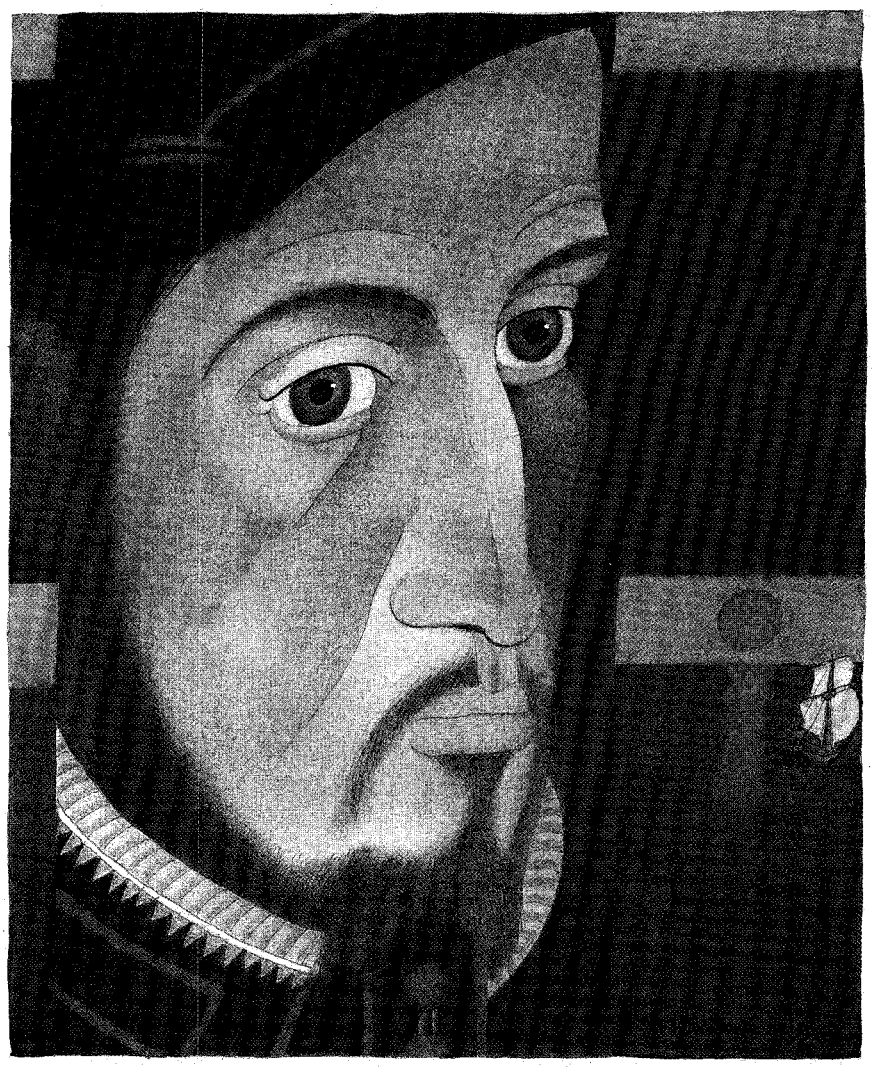
The King Who Sent the Armada

He ruled Spain in the years when it bestrode the world—but his was an empire on which the sun suddenly set

by Francis X. Rocca

PHILIP OF SPAIN

by Henry Kamen.
Yale University Press,
384 pages, $35.00.



IT was evening when the grand chamberlain approached the canopied bed to deliver the physicians' verdict. King Philip had lain in agony for more than seven weeks—parched with fever, swollen by dropsy, covered with sores, and wallowing in his own excrement because he found it too painful to be moved or touched, even for cleaning. The stench was so strong that even one of the doctors sickened. Yet the "Catholic King" had always taken comfort from his devotions; the walls of the alcove where he lay were hung with crucifixes and icons, and through the open doors to his left he could see the high altar of the Escorial, the monastery he had built to serve as his palace and tomb. Perhaps his unyielding faith had been rewarded: for the past day or so his sufferings had seemed miraculously to abate. He was alert and energetic, ordering his attendants about.

But the chamberlain brought bad news: His Majesty was rapidly failing. At once Philip sent for his clergy. Led by the Archbishop of Toledo, they read and preached to him through the night, one taking over when another tired. The dying man was indefatigable, refusing to rest; his expression was gay, and at one point he even laughed aloud. For his last hours he clutched a blessed candle in one gout-stricken hand and a crucifix in the other—the same objects his father, the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, had grasped on his own deathbed. Before him sat the rib of a martyred saint encased in its silver reliquary. At five in the morning on September 13, 1598, as the sun rose and the seminarians of the Escorial sang the mass, Philip II of Spain died at the age of seventy-one.

The 400th anniversary of that event, next year, is the impetus for many commemorative volumes, of which Henry Kamen's *Philip of Spain* is one. There is plenty to commemorate. Philip II ruled the largest empire in history, the first on which the sun never set. He defeated the Turks at Lepanto, sent the doomed Armada against renegade England, and started the Eighty Years' War against the Dutch Calvinists. Within his own country he fervently backed the Inquisition's campaign to root out heterodoxy. His enemies and allies acknowledged him—and he regarded himself—as the champion of the Church under siege.

The King's labors earned him hundreds of years of bad press. In 1581 the Dutch

Illustrations by Etienne Delessert

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rebel leader William of Orange wrote a tract accusing Philip of incest, sodomy, and the murder of his own son. Outside Spain, especially in Protestant countries, the King's traditional image has been of a warmongering, heretic-burning despot, averse to human company and obsessed with human remains (those of his dynasty as well as of saints). In 1856 the American historian John Lothrop Motley wrote of Philip, "If there are vices—as possibly there are—from which he was exempt, it is because it is not permitted to human nature to attain perfection even in evil."

In the century since Spain lost the last significant parts of its empire, the man who ruled that empire at its height has received increasingly sympathetic treatment in long-hostile quarters. Biographies from Denmark (1909) and Germany (1938) have depicted him as a caring father, an art lover, and an occasional poet. Twenty years ago the English historian Geoffrey Parker rendered a humanizing portrait of the King as revealed in his correspondence: thoughtful, courageous, but also what we would today call anal.

Now Kamen, also a Briton, offers the most favorable major assessment of Philip ever written in English. Here is no trace of the fanatic, the tyrant, or the lugubrious royal hermit—not even of the nitpicking bureaucrat, more concerned with his secretaries' grammar than with the substance of their reports. Kamen's Philip is "a devotee of dancing, court festivities, and rites of chivalry" and an ardent lover of women and guardian of the poor—not to mention "one of the first ecologist rulers in European history." He enforces religious conformity primarily for the sake of civil peace, and although he enjoys the occasional auto da fé, "he never [witnesses] the burnings." To reach this stage of rehabilitation has taken Philip four centuries, but that would not have seemed too long to the man who said "Time and I are a match for any two."

TIME would naturally have seemed to be Philip's ally; he descended from the oldest and greatest families of Europe. His father was the last of a type that harked back to Charlemagne: the Emperor as crusader. Charles spent most of his reign fighting the Turks in the Mediterranean, the Lutherans in Germany, and the French in Italy. In one of Titian's greatest portraits, painted after Charles's triumph over the Protestant princes at Mühlberg (1547), the Emperor appears astride a rearing horse, clad in armor and bearing a lance. Above him the cloud-streaked sky seems to signify calm after a storm. It was actually darkening again. Within a few years Charles's allies betrayed him and undid his victories in Germany. Exhausted, the Emperor abdicated at the age of fifty-five, handing over to Philip the last of his possessions except for the imperial title and the German and Central European lands that went with it; these passed to Charles's brother and to the Austrian Hapsburgs after him. Philip's legacy included Spain and its New World territories (Mexico, the Caribbean, Central America, and Peru), the Low Countries (latter-day Belgium and the Netherlands), and half of Italy. At the time, he was also King consort of England, but that reign would end with the death of his wife, "Bloody Mary" Tudor, in 1558.

Philip also inherited his father's fair hair and blue eyes, and the unmistakable protruding jaw of the Hapsburgs. But unlike the polyglot Emperor, the King never mastered any modern language save Spanish, and spent most of his life on the Iberian Peninsula. With rare and early exceptions he led his troops from behind a desk, where he tirelessly turned out the reams of letters, memoranda, and annotations that historians would treasure (in the atrocious handwriting that they would curse). Charles, for all his dignity, was warm and approachable, but Philip had a reserved and soft-spoken manner that matured into a fearsome intensity; sometimes he struck visitors dumb with his steady gaze and long, patient silences. As the portraits show, his clothes were even soberer than his father's; in later years he usually dressed in black—the "Spanish style" he made fashionable across Europe (even if, as Kamen claims, he never gave up bright colors altogether). It was a style that befitted frequent mourning: he buried all four of his wives and all but two of his eight children.

Among Philip's far-flung domains the Low Countries had an importance far out of proportion to their size. This importance was in part symbolic and personal. The Emperor had been born in Flanders, and had chosen Brussels for the ceremony of his abdication. Philip himself was a great aficionado and importer of Flemish architecture, gardening, music, and painting (especially the moral grotesques of Hieronymus Bosch). But these rich, entrepreneurial provinces had a less sentimental value as well. They were, as Kamen puts it, "Spain's economic lifeline": the most important intermediary in its trade with northern Europe, and a major source of the loans and tax revenues with which the Crown paid for its wars. Moreover, they occupied a geographical position of immense strategic importance. For these reasons sectarian violence there turned into an international crisis and the source of Philip's greatest troubles.

In 1517 Martin Luther had nailed his ninety-five theses to the door of the castle church at Wittenberg. Since then hopes for theological compromise had failed, and an even more revolutionary movement had emerged from John Calvin's city-state of Geneva. Protestants persecuted in France fled to the southern Low Countries in the early 1560s. In 1566 Calvinist preachers in Flanders incited crowds to burn and smash the "idolatrous" images polluting their churches, and this "Iconoclastic Fury" soon spread to the other provinces. The King sent the Duke of Alba to restore order, but the duke's policy of military occupation, mass execution, and heavy taxes to pay for it all only provoked rebellion. (Even four centuries later Belgian and Dutch parents have been known to invoke Alba as a bogeyman to scare their naughty children.)

The conflict divided even the royal family itself. In 1559 Philip had promised to make Don Carlos, his son and heir, the governor of the Low Countries—the first step in the eventual inheritance of his father's realms. At the time, the boy may have seemed suited to his prospects. But head injuries resulting from a near-fatal fall in his teens left Don Carlos violent and unstable: he tossed a page out a window, forced a shoemaker to eat an unsatisfactory pair of boots, and even hinted at threats to his father.

In late 1567 the King learned of his son's plans to flee to the rebellious provinces. Just before midnight on January 18, 1568, Philip went to the prince's chambers in the royal palace of Madrid, accompanied by a small party of guards and councillors. The King was wearing a

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helmet and carrying a sword. Reaching the prince's door, he found it locked and bolted, but the guards forced it open. "Has Your Majesty come to kill me?" Don Carlos asked.

The prince was placed in confinement, where he set about attempting suicide in various ways: gorging or starving himself, swallowing a diamond, chilling himself with ice. Eventually he did take sick, and by the end of July he was dead. Rumors arose that he had been killed for plotting with the rebels—or for making love to his young stepmother, who suspiciously enough died later the same year (in fact from complications in childbirth). There had been a real danger that Philip's enemies would exploit the disturbed young man as a figurehead; but the stories of an affair between the prince and the Queen were baseless. There is no evidence that the King killed his son or his wife. Yet the accusations grew into a legend with irresistible romantic appeal, which eventually inspired a play by Friedrich Schiller and an opera by Giuseppe Verdi.

As the war in the Low Countries dragged on, Philip was alternately conciliatory and aggressive, but not until the end of his life did he allow even the possibility of toleration. The main reason, according to Kamen, was the King's concern for order. As proof that religious disunity perforce meant social and political chaos, Philip could point to the ongoing civil wars in France, the most notorious episode in which remains the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre of the Calvinist Huguenots in 1572. (Not that the King deplored that massacre: its "good news" made him "laugh, with signs of extreme pleasure and satisfaction.") Other historians have stressed Philip's belief in his providential role as a defender of the faith. In any case, freedom of conscience was hardly a prevalent ideal in the sixteenth century. Certainly it was not the watchword of the Reformation: Luther, Calvin, and Huldreich Zwingli all sanctioned the killing of their theological opponents. Indeed, it would have been remarkable if Philip *had* condoned the spread of "heresy" among his subjects.

The heretics were not to be stopped, however: Spain never recovered the breakaway provinces of Holland and Zealand, nucleus of the modern Dutch nation. The struggle against them proved

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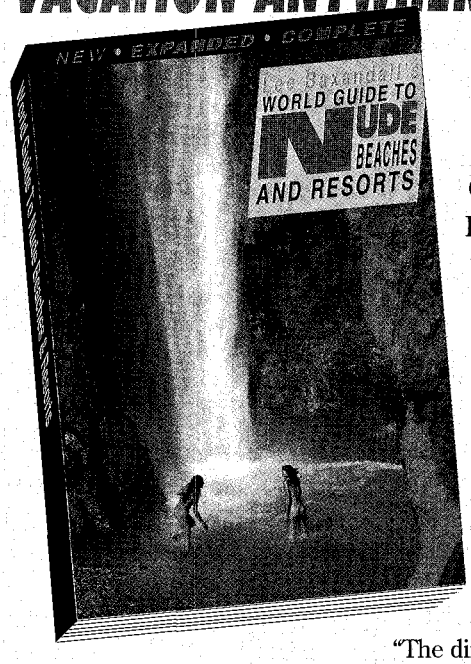

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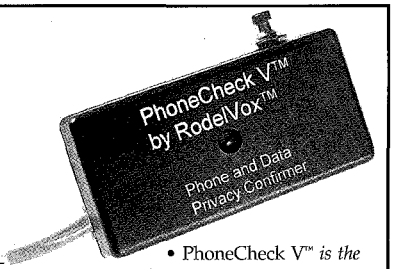

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a huge and constant drain on the taxpayers of Castile and gobbled up the output of the Peruvian silver mines—one of the major reasons that Philip declared bankruptcy more than once during his reign. Neighboring powers took advantage of the conflict to harm Spain and help the Protestant cause. The French Huguenots and the Lutheran princes of Germany aided the Dutch rebels, and in 1585 England sent 8,000 soldiers to free Antwerp from Spanish occupation. This last action—combined with Sir Francis Drake's raids on Spanish ships and ports in the Old and New Worlds—spurred Philip to send the "Invincible Armada" in 1588. The result was a legendary disaster that led Philip, normally so sure of divine favor, to wonder if God had abandoned him. It remains the biggest single reason that people in the English-speaking world tend to remember him as a failure, the initiator of his country's long, slow decline.

Yet "failure" hardly seems the word for a man who augmented his vast inheritance with the Philippines (named for him) and Portugal, with all of *its* colonies (parts of Africa, India, and Indonesia, and all of Brazil). He also consolidated Spain's holdings in latter-day Chile and Argentina. His empire was not only military and mercantile but also cultural, and in this last respect it was surely an enduring success: Spanish is today the fourth most widely spoken language in the world, and Roman Catholicism the second most widely professed faith, owing largely to the conquests made during Philip's reign.

Nonetheless, by the end of that reign the people of Spain were impoverished and war-weary, and over the next sixty years—through the exhausting stalemates of the Thirty Years' War and yet another conflict with France—Spain would lose forever its dominance in European affairs. The debts and entanglements Philip left behind were a large part of the cause.

How was it that a King whose interests lay in peace found himself almost constantly at war? It never seemed to him that he had a choice. He had to defend Italy not only because it was the center of Catholicism but also because if it fell, nothing would stand between Spain and the Turks. Nor could he abandon the New World colonies, source of the precious metals on which he increasingly relied, to the English or the Dutch. When the Portuguese throne fell vacant in 1580, he had to claim it or face a potentially hostile power on his border. For the same reason, but without the same success, he invaded France in 1590, hoping to install a sympathetic Catholic (such as his own daughter) as sovereign. As for the Low Countries, the King and his advisers believed that surrendering there would somehow lead to the fall of other strategic dominoes—and to the loss of that priceless commodity "reputation." Although Philip's Spain was by far the greatest military power of its day, it was never able to muster the forces necessary to defeat so many enemies. Thus it has remained, for Paul Kennedy and other historians, a paradigmatic case of "strategical overstretch."

In Henry Kamen's view, little of this was the King's fault: "Philip was never at any time in adequate control of events, or of his kingdoms, or even of his own destiny. . . . He could do little more than play the dice available to him." It is hard to argue with this. Certainly the "Prudent King" made some bad decisions (the Armada is especially easy to second-guess), but no man, however wise, could have beaten down the combined and rising forces of Protestantism, European nationalism, and Dutch and English sea power. Nevertheless, one wishes that Kamen had addressed a major question raised by Kennedy: With less "retrograde" policies on trade, agriculture, currency, and taxation, could Philip have narrowed the gap between the Crown's military spending and its economic resources, and thus have forestalled Spain's decline?

If we compare him with contemporary monarchs, Philip comes off well—both as a ruler and as a human being. The reason he has fared so badly until lately, Kamen persuasively suggests, is that he "failed to project his image," disdaining the visual and literary propaganda mastered by his rivals, especially Elizabeth of England. In his eagerness to revise the reputation of his subject, however, Kamen goes to extremes that undermine the credibility of his portrait. He is the rare historian who finds no evidence of the King's guilt in two of the most scandalous incidents of Philip's reign: the secret execution of the Flemish rebel Baron Montigny and the murder of the secretary Juan de Escobedo. His description of Philip as "a firm anti-expansionist" is bound to be controversial as well. But Kamen, who acknowledges the many instances in which he differs with other scholars, obviously welcomes controversy. And Philip, who positively encouraged disagreement among his advisers to help inform his decisions, would surely welcome it as well.

The Roots of War

by Thomas Powers

BLOOD RITES:
Origins and History of the Passions of War

by Barbara Ehrenreich. Holt/Metropolitan Books, 292 pages, $25.00.

As we approach the end of a century marked by wars on a scale without precedent in 5,000 years of recorded human history (so many dead from the years 1914–1918 and 1939–1945 alone that the sober estimates of cautious scholars can vary by tens of millions), and as we prepare to enter a new century with weapons, still unblooded (to use an archaic term) in their modern form, that supersede in destructive capacity all previous weapons by a multiple so great that it is academic—at just this moment, with bitter experience behind us and fearful prospects before us, we are invited by the essayist Barbara Ehrenreich to ask whether all this killing makes any sense.

We might ask, but governments don't. No big argument is required to get the U.S. government, for one, to spend millions to prevent epidemics of influenza, or to predict earthquakes and hurricanes, or to identify the exact cause of airline accidents like the midair explosion of TWA Flight 800 that killed a few hundred people last year. These and count-

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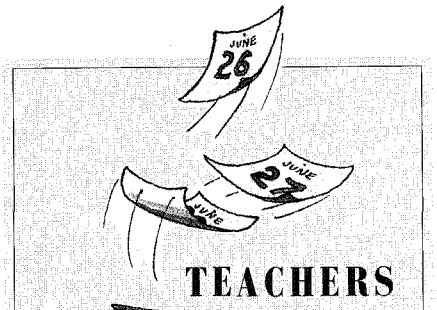
less other threats to the health and well-being of Americans are considered to be problems of a discoverable nature suggesting methods of resolution—things, in short, that we can figure out and prevent. But when it comes to war, which has killed a million Americans and served as the great ratchet of the national debt, the response of official Washington is millions for defense but not one penny for etiology! Crime is a problem. Disease is a problem. Acid rain is a problem. Even poverty is sometimes considered and studied (although not at the moment) as a problem. But war, in the working hypothesis of the U.S. and other governments, although cruel and expensive, is not an affliction but one end of the continuum of international relations—what we try next, in matters of genuine gravity and substance, after diplomacy fails.

This is what the nineteenth-century Prussian theorist Carl von Clausewitz meant when he defined war as a continuation of policy by other means. For a time following the defeat of Napoleon the nations of Europe seemed to have the calculus of war under control, limiting operations in the field to small imperial wars against natives without Gatling guns; the brief, crushing lessons that Bismarck taught the Austrians and the French; the dispatch of gunboats to contested waters, and the like. But all that—the sense of war as rational, controllable, safe; of history as the story of progress; of international trade as a guarantor of peace—was flicked aside by the insane bloodletting of the Great War, which settled over Europe in 1914 as implacably as the onset of an ice age.

The modern study of war properly begins there, on the Western Front, where the ruling elites of Europe squandered the lives of their own sons. Historians of diplomacy are pretty much agreed on how the war got started, and how the peace imposed at Versailles ploughed the ground for a second war, and how the indecision of Britain and France in the 1930s helped bring it on, and how the quarrels of the new victors over frontiers and social systems threatened to end in yet a third war. Explanations have a calming effect; traced in long books, the history of the First World War does seem a case of one thing leading to another. But what chain of reasons could have led to the Battle of the Somme, say, where the British suffered nearly 60,000 casualties on the first day; or to the Battle of Verdun, where nearly a million men were returned to earth not as dust but as a soil supplement of bone, fat, and protein? How do we address that in the classroom? If Verdun was a continuation by other means, what in the name of God was the policy?

WHAT we need, if we want to understand the century and take corrective action, Barbara Ehrenreich argues in *Blood Rites: Origins and History of the Passions of War*, is not another theory of international relations but a theory of war itself, of the heart of war, of killing by men in groups. It was a theory of disease, after all, that first prompted surgeons to scrub up; maybe a theory of war could do what defense budgets and war colleges have not done. With no such grand hopes in mind at first, but simply finding herself a decade ago in need of a theory of war, so that she could write a preface to a book, Ehrenreich undertook to craft one. She is best known for her essays in *Time* magazine, and her nine previous books are all on other themes; but, she says frankly, "the reckless amateur rushes in where the prudent scholar fears to tread." The result is a bold and imaginative attempt to do what the conventional historians have funked—that is, to identify the moment when the urge to war became a part of human nature, so that we can see it plain like the other elemental emotions: sexual desire, love of children, suspicion of strangers, fear of the dark. This is one of those intellectual projects for which the best, and indeed the only, qualification is a passionate curiosity.

Ehrenreich has a doctorate in biology from Rockefeller University, but she is not a scientist. She's a reader. *Blood Rites* is a short book with a long bibliography. Ehrenreich brushes past standard military history—dates, battles, night marches, and flanking movements. Much of her reading consists of scholarly books of the past decade or two about war and related forms of bloodshed among pre-literate cultures. Her publisher describes her as "a social critic"—giving her a writer's equivalent of James Bond's license to kill. But although Ehrenreich does not fear to guess deep,



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she never pretends to a higher degree of certainty than is possible. She has done a great deal of homework, she is free of cant, and she is smart. Her starting points are firm and clear: she thinks that human beings have a nature, that our attraction to war is at least partly inherited, and that the study of human culture can provide clues to the structural place and function of war-making in the human psyche; and she believes that knowing what war is may help humankind to control it. Ehrenreich reaches back through human history and culture for the moment when the shedding of blood became something men not only suffered but did. What she has found is this:

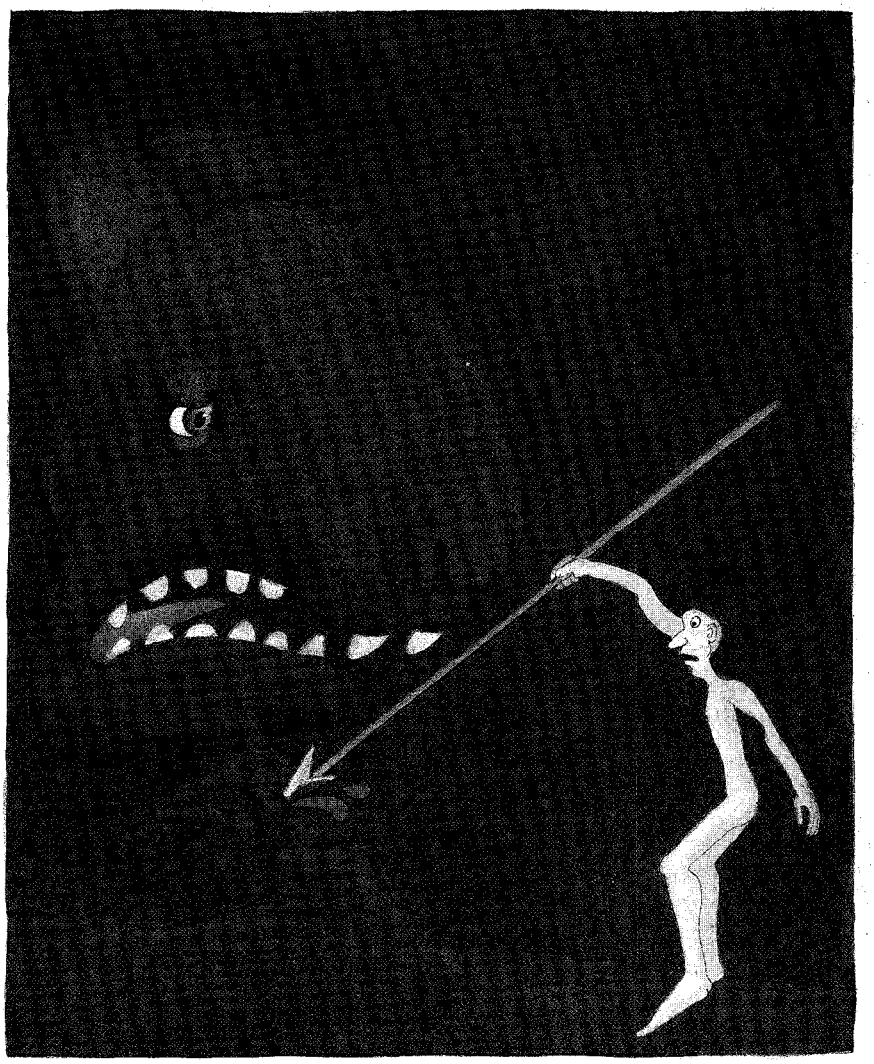
War is not the origin of war. It was not the fighting of men in groups that came first but the terror inspired in early human beings by predator beasts—lions and tigers and bears—and the attempts of early human beings to kill the beasts that made them prey. Anyone who stokes a campfire in grizzly-bear country will get the idea in a hurry. Tigers in India and lions and leopards in Africa have terrorized human communities well into the present century. Ehrenreich vividly evokes the still-greater terror that must have shadowed the thinking of early hominids, whose lives depended on shouting, or throwing sticks and stones, or the harsh reality that many may flee while one is dragged down—the principle of survival of fish in schools and ruminants in herds. What is the appropriate feeling toward the one who dies—anger? sorrow? gratitude? The most startling single image from a recently discovered cave in France was not the walls painted 30,000 years ago but the placement of a bear's skull on a large limestone rock in the center of one room. In the soft cave floor were the still-crisp footprints of the men who, we can hardly help believing, worshipped what they feared.

The danger posed by predator beasts may have disappeared from all but the most primitive communities, but the fear still runs deep. Ehrenreich cites a 1965 study of American schoolchildren which found that in a list of "things to be afraid of" 80 percent of five- and six-year-olds included wild animals, especially snakes, lions, tigers, and bears. Bear attacks on hikers, mountain-lion attacks on joggers, shark attacks on swimmers, are routinely reported in *The New York Times*, not because they are common but because they excite a primal fear. For early human beings, learning to kill predator beasts was an epochal event, like the making of tools, the conquest of fire, the invention of agriculture.

But the primal feelings, Ehrenreich believes, were all mixed up. She argues that the earliest human groups were probably scavengers, depending for food at least partly on the kills made by predator beasts. The lions in effect not only ate but fed them—becoming a kind of paradigm of primitive gods who simultaneously gave life and demanded blood sacrifice. In a similar muddy way the primitive mind not only raised up and admired the hunters who killed predator beasts but also thanked and commemorated those who died in the effort. Death as sacrifice, killing as deliverance, blood as the coin of exchange with the gods—wrapped up in these primitive feelings, Ehrenreich believes, can be found the

> "original trauma" that shaped the human response to violence . . . the trauma of *being* hunted by animals, and eaten. Here, most likely, lies the source of our human habit of sacralizing violence: in the terror inspired by the devouring beast and in the powerful emotions, associated with courage and altruism, that were required for group defense.

Thinkers with big ideas (Hegel, Sartre, and Foucault all spring to mind) sometimes wrap the kernel in wordy swaddling clothes of ramification and qualification, as if fearing that the clarity of a few un-comma'd sentences would reveal their insight to be a puny thing. Ehrenreich writes in the spirit of Hobbes and Gibbon; she is wonderfully brisk and plainspoken about what she has in mind, she goes straight to it, and then she tells us how the subsequent history of war is illumined once we understand war's origins in group defense against predator beasts—and in the "sacralization" of



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violence, which is simultaneously defense, conquest, and blood sacrifice. Ehrenreich agrees with her fellow war theorist Gwynne Dyer that "pre-civilized warfare . . . was predominantly a rough male sport for underemployed hunters." During the past 15,000 years or so, she believes, the gradual replacement of animal adversaries by men was paralleled by a growing culture of war and warrior elites, culminating in the circular logic, familiar from Homer's *Iliad* and the movies of John Wayne, that "men make war . . . because war makes them men."

BUT fear not. Although *Blood Rites* argues that in most human societies war has been culturally associated with maleness, Ehrenreich does not put the blame for war on men, or on "aggression" as a primarily male emotion. She rejects the "hunting hypothesis," first argued in a broad popular way nearly forty years ago, by the playwright Robert Ardrey in *African Genesis*, which suggests that success as carnivores (that is, hunters) encouraged in men a killer or killing instinct, and that this instinct in turn found expression in the form of intra-human killing we call war. Ardrey, now largely forgotten, was an interesting figure, much like Ehrenreich in the ardor and energy of his speculations, and in the fact that he set up shop in a scholarly precinct where the ruling passion of the gatekeepers was methodology. Writers like Ardrey and Ehrenreich are sometimes called "independent scholars"—another way of saying untenured, unpublished in the professional literature, and unencumbered by an appropriate degree. Academics often resent the wild, free life of the independents, and tend to dismiss their work as "popular" and lacking in rigor. What drove Ardrey was a belief, far from universal among anthropologists of the time, that men had an ethos, an inherited character or nature that was as much a part of their cerebral makeup as nest-building was of birds', or chest-thumping and teeth-baring was of male mountain gorillas'. Killing was one big part of human nature, in Ardrey's view, and the territorial instinct was another. Like Ehrenreich, he had read everything, and wrote with energy and clarity. Scholars ho-hummed for the most part, but Ardrey was widely read. Others pursued the ideas he had first scented in the air, and his core belief—that in many regards human beings do not have to learn how to behave but are born *knowing*—is now broadly accepted as reasonable, if not proven.

Ehrenreich is working roughly the same vineyard, but what links her most closely with Ardrey is their common conviction that any hope of controlling, limiting, or even ending war requires above all a theory of war. I agree, and I have a few theories of my own about war. One of them is that organized killing by men in groups is the fruit of the human genius that invented weapons. Other primates' fighting rarely involves the drawing of blood, much less actual killing. Most encounters never go beyond roaring and fierce display. But weapons simultaneously make anger lethal and reduce the horror of direct encounter. In short, weapons make war possible.

My theory is that combat is so terrifying that only a fully developed system of special rewards and inducements, backed up by fear of shame, punishment, or even death itself, can push the troops forward. Military historians make much of the incredible casualty rates among young officers—in tanks and on the Western Front in the First World War, in the bombers that attacked Germany in the Second World War—as if the privileges of rank were only token compensation for the frightful dangers of command; but in fact most of the time things work the other way around. Armies are organized in pyramidal form, and as a general rule the danger lessens as one gets closer to the top. Until the advent of atomic weapons, heads of state were rarely at risk at all. Indeed, we might well write the history of war as a history of the invention of weapons with increasing range—that is, killing at a distance—and of organizational innovations with the purpose of getting other people to do the fighting.

ALONG with my basic theory I have developed a corollary about people who invent theories of war: that what prompts them is a close personal encounter with death, and that attempts to solve the problem of war by studying it closely are really a displaced and sublimated effort to conquer death and the fear of death. Ehrenreich has a simpler idea about the origin of her theory of

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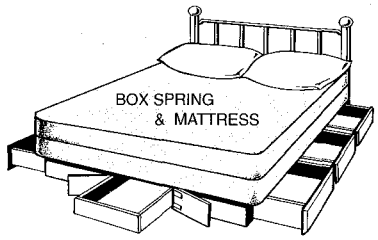

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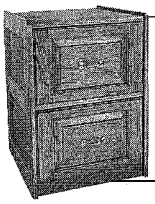

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war: she developed it, she writes very much in the spirit of Clausewitz, because she needed a theory of war to carry out a literary project. I don't think so.

But we won't try to settle that here. As theories go, mine about theorists has one advantage over Ehrenreich's about war: it is falsifiable—it can be proved wrong. One might inquire closely of Ehrenreich and other theorists, and their replies would either reveal a pattern of worrying about death followed by theory-making or it wouldn't. It's conceivable that neurologists will someday discover a way to read back from human beings' existing brain structure to expose the stages of the development of innate social behavior, but failing some such breakthrough in methodology, there's no way to know whether Ehrenreich's theory is true or not, and its only utility can be to enrich with a kind of poetic resonance our thinking about war. This her theory achieves. It cautions us that war has emotional roots, that the urge to fight may sometimes be irrational, that we may be hasty in the choice of enemies, that enemies may be impulsive and unpredictable, that God may not be on our side—or on any side. But Ehrenreich's theory fails—as, in my view, all other theories, including my own, fail—in one important respect: it cannot tell us what to do.

I think Ehrenreich herself senses this. After 200 pages of wide-ranging and consistently interesting comment on every imaginable war-related form of human behavior, *Blood Rites* pulls up lame.

"No matter how futile, repulsive, or dysfunctional war may be," Ehrenreich writes, "it persists." Here I balk. Just which wars is she dismissing as futile? The American Civil War, which ended slavery and preserved the Union? The Second World War, which ended the occupation of most of Europe by Germany and stopped Hitler's annihilation of European Jews while some still remained alive? The Korean War, which prevented the military annexation of South Korea by the North? The Vietnamese wars of independence, which ejected the French and the Americans? The Persian Gulf War, which ended the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, prevented the concentration of a fifth of the world's oil reserves in the hands of Saddam Hussein, and halted his program to build nuclear weapons?

"War can no longer serve its ancient function as a male ritual of initiation," Ehrenreich writes. But wait a minute—was that really its function? War is terrible, but it is usually about things that matter. We may argue that it is unnecessary, or needlessly bloody and cruel, or stupidly conducted—but to call it futile is to ignore the consequences of victory and defeat that, in prospect, are what make men fight in the first place. Ehrenreich has brilliantly evoked the emotional texture of war, but to suppose that men fight because it makes them feel a certain way is to argue, in effect, that cities have fire departments so that Irishmen may drive big trucks in Saint Patrick's Day parades.

At this point my theory departs widely from Ehrenreich's. To me it seems that she has confused what war is like with what war is for. In her view, "war" is the "adversary"; what we need is "anti-war movements" that have all the virtues (courage, tenacity, self-sacrifice) of warrior elites and none of the failings (belligerence, hate, bloodlust). "We will need leaders. . . . We will need strategies and cunning. . . . [We] must prepare . . . to lose battle after battle and still fight on."

The reader is startled. Ehrenreich is arguing a cartoon version of traditional pacifism, as if war were a moral failing and might be avoided only by moral resolve. But nowhere does she make a pacifist's considered argument that all war is senseless, self-defeating, and wrong. I doubt she really believes it. The last, hurried pages of *Blood Rites* are less a conclusion than a rhetorical flourish.

I sympathize. When to go to war is always an immensely complex question. No single rule can prescribe a reliable course of action. Ehrenreich's book does something fundamental in helping to teach us forbearance, but nothing she writes implies that we must *always* forbear. I draw a different conclusion from the many wars of this century: that conflicts must be confronted, not avoided; that limits must be clear; that no must mean no; that force should always be the last resort, employed only in disputes of genuine gravity, but never funked in hope of getting off cheap. The cause of war is something immediate, in-your-face, the fact that someone has crossed the line. The first requirement of peace, among nations as in families, is knowing where to draw the line.

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The Academy vs. the Humanities

by Frank Kermode

LITERATURE LOST:
Social Agendas and the Corruption of the Humanities

by John M. Ellis.
Yale University Press,
272 pages, $25.00.

As a retired professor of English who now and again returns to teaching, I am aware that the work I try to do with my students has less and less in common with what is going on in adjacent classrooms. I regret being out of step, but it is too late to break the habits of a lifetime, and in any case I cannot believe that they are bad habits. My class sits around a table reading and discussing the poetry of, say, Yeats, or Donne. My plan is to conduct an inquiry into these bodies of poetry such that every member of the class will know enough about them to understand how they can change and enrich the minds of at least some readers—even if awareness of temporal distance or ideological difference may cause them to feel out of sympathy with the poets.

For it may well happen that students will keenly disapprove of the known politics or religion of a writer, or seek to discover in his or her work hidden senses of which it might be equally proper to disapprove; and such prejudices may well prevent their actually loving what they read. But they need to learn that excellent poetry may—in fact, almost always must—express political, religious, or social convictions they cannot share. If that were not so, we could not read Homer or Dante or T. S. Eliot or Ezra Pound without experiencing constant disagreement, tedium, or even disgust. And I must say that it is an enlivening experience to watch a group of intelligent young people habituating themselves to a poet who offers them very little in the way of instant gratification, to see them thinking through a poem for its own sake, without prejudice. Soon their interests may be widened in scope; they may need to find out more about quaint George Herbert, may even want to ask whether and how quaint Emily Dickinson, who is known to have copied out part of one of his poems, was affected by the English poet. Affection and respect for poetry spread by such means. But first must come the recognition of a certain admirable mastery and the perception of some benefit in recognizing it. As to whether students share Herbert's Anglican piety or deplore Yeats's flirtation with fascism, these should be secondary considerations; the direct experience of poetry is what will enrich them. For pedagogues to argue, as in various ways they do, that the political bearing of a work of literature is the most important thing about it—or that it ought first to be studied as just another document in some historical power negotiation—is, in my view, a subversion of their calling.

I ADMIT that my approach to literary study is obsolescent. What has taken its place—the ways of attending or not attending to literature that have replaced the study of it—is the subject of John M. Ellis's grave and minatory book *Literature Lost: Social Agendas and the Corruption of the Humanities*. Ellis is astonished by and deeply concerned about the extraordinary changes that have come over the teaching of the humanities in American universities (they have been copied elsewhere). He is, of course, not the first commentator to express dismay at what is happening; what distinguishes him is the clarity of his perceptions, and his willingness not merely to deplore the new trends but—faithful to an academic tradition he believes to be in serious danger—to subject them to disinterested inquiry. He therefore examines them in as much detail as is necessary to support his view that the thinking behind them is hardly to be counted as thinking at all. And what most alarms him is the consideration that these trends are so firmly established in the academy that they will not fade, as other fads and fashions have faded, but will remain dominant for a ruinously long time.

Ellis has done work of this kind before, notably in his book *Against Deconstruction*. Since he argues honestly, with all his cards on the table, he can say that in an academy where ideas were taken serious-

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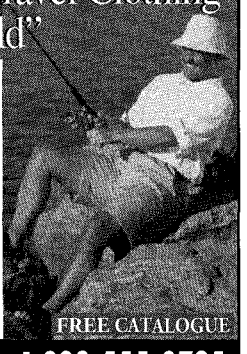
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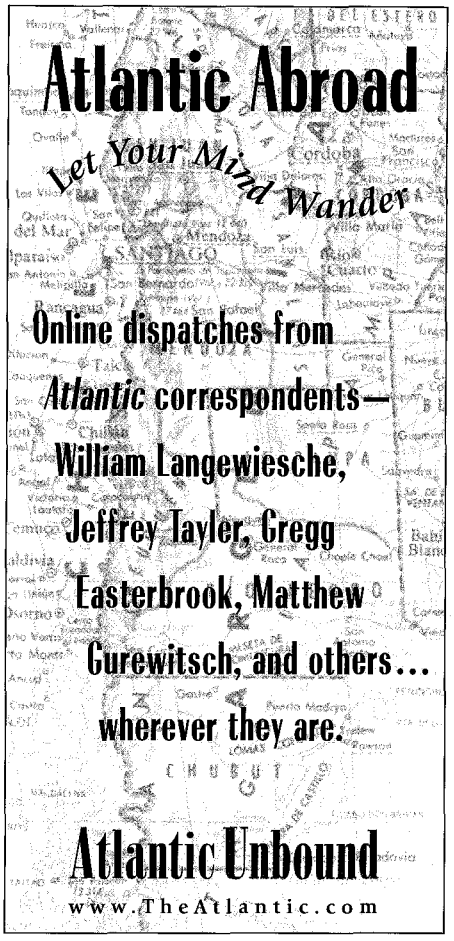

ly he could confidently expect to elicit a reasoned reply to his criticisms. But he no longer believes that ideas are taken seriously; the assumption that they should be belongs to a conception of what the university is *for* that is at present being flouted and abandoned. So he cannot be surprised that criticisms of the kind he makes are as a rule not answered but merely written off as incorrigibly corrupt simply because they are critical of the ruling doctrines. Fundamental dissent is ignored or dismissed; sometimes, and quite disgracefully, it is banned in classrooms.

What dismays Ellis is the extraordinary fact that the very professoriat that a mere generation ago had to defend the humanities against utilitarian arguments is now arguing "against the Western tradition in thought and literature," maintaining not only that "studying Shakespeare and Plato is a superfluous diversion from more serious pursuits but that such a study can be positively harmful." Books formerly held to be liberating are now said to close the mind. They brainwash their readers into accepting a "reactionary ideology, and make [them] conform to the ideas of a privileged class" ("dead white males") whose power-hungry pretensions have finally been exposed. This vicious curriculum must be supplanted by one that acknowledges that the ultimate purpose of all study is political; its concerns must be race, gender, and class. Ellis gently reminds us of Stalin's endorsement of the fraudulent scientist Lysenko, and of the Soviet corruption of biological science. Such things can happen when, there being no academic freedom, political programs take control of the sites of research.

The tone of Ellis's book grows darker as he progresses, but his comments on the now generally accepted emphasis on the paramountcy of the political bearing of literature are calm enough: It is a simple logical error to start from the indisputable fact that everything has a political dimension and arrive at the proposition that politics is always the most important dimension. This erroneous belief has resulted in the reduction of criticism to a single quest for the defining political sense. The acceptance of Foucault's reduction of history to a conflict of powers, so that the purpose of Foucauldian critics is merely to seek evidence of oppression, also depends on a logical error. It is held to be axiomatic that all knowledge, being socially constructed, has no objective validity—though the knowledge on which this belief is founded is silently excluded from the censure. Professors who are willing to admit that they care very little for literature (it is now quite usual for some of them to do so) will seek in it the one thing that interests them, a political content of which the significance is predetermined, thus committing what Ellis calls "the fallacy of the single factor." They take away from the object of study only what they bring to it.

THE foundation of Ellis's critique is a conviction that we owe our relative intellectual and social happiness (now under threat) to the gradual achievements of the Enlightenment, a still uncompleted project. Political correctness itself would have been impossible except as the product of a historical process that the politically correct despise. Life without enlightenment is nasty and brutish, yet it is the natural condition; utopian fantasies about the superior virtue of the Third World should be examined in the light of the fate of all such primitivist fantasies, all denials of the intellectual and social progress achieved in the despised Western tradition. Women in particular should ask themselves whether life in societies that settle their ethnic problems by genocide, use mass rape as a means to power, practice female circumcision, and so on, is really preferable to life in a society that may be far from perfectly just but is certainly a lot further along the way to justice.

Ellis grows more polemical when he deals with such thinkers as Fredric Jameson and Stanley Fish and, not least, with feminist critics (he regards this expression as a contradiction in terms, on the grounds that true criticism doesn't have a single-approach label attached to it). The idea that one should hunt through literature for evidence of oppression, as the "race-gender-class" critics do, is disgusting to him. Ellis claims that Jameson, a great force in the modern academy though of less importance outside it, can find excuses not only for the Nazi sympathies of Martin Heidegger and Paul de Man but also for the massacres instigated by Stalin and Pol Pot, and can announce that the New Deal and Nazism were in some respects much the same thing. He is

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capable of such an absurdity as announcing that the "visual is *essentially* pornographic." He "appears," Ellis says severely, "to lack any moral sensibility"; and his influence "derives neither from the power of his argument nor from the moral force of his position but only from his having furnished what seems to those who use it a serviceable underpinning for the victim-centered criticism that has overtaken university literature departments."

As for feminist critics, it seems that the single-issue approach has become so dictatorial that feminist professors can require their students to make a formal declaration of unquestioning adherence to the cause before admitting them to a class in which dissent is forbidden; a male professor can be charged with harassment merely for presuming to criticize feminist colleagues; and the Modern Language Association of America might well endorse such actions. Of course, Ellis is not opposed to the economic and social advancement of women, made possible by historical change and progressive enlightenment, but he is hard on the indiscriminate and vacuous condemnation of "patriarchy" as the agent of female victimization. Using the idea of patriarchy in this way actually restricts the intellectual freedom of those who profess to believe in it, he thinks. Worse nonsense inevitably follows: for example, the application of feminist ideas to science, with a concomitant condemnation of all male science (the *Principia Mathematica* has been called "Newton's Rape Manual"). If you can believe that all sexual intercourse is rape, you can believe anything. Well might Ellis say that "the feminism typical of campus women's studies has little credibility among the general public."

This gap between campus race-gender-class theory and the interests of the larger world has some importance. It is perfectly possible to hold that the position of women and ethnic minorities has improved within living memory without suggesting that further improvement is unnecessary. In fact, most of the intelligent population off campus probably does take that view, and would not accept that since the time of prehistoric utopia we have lived under conditions in which Western women suffer intolerable oppression at the hands of patriarchal males. Certain conformists apart, intelli-

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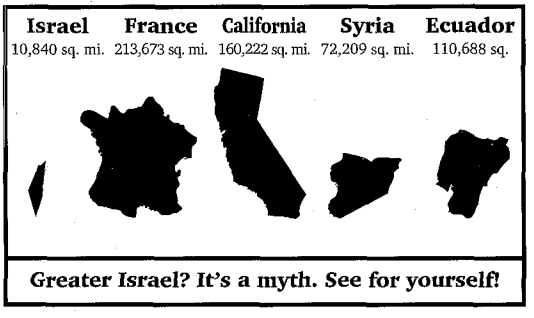
Israel's Borders. "Palestine," part of the Ottoman Empire before World War I, came under British mandate after that war. The Golan Heights were part of Palestine. Israel's current borders are the result of the 1948 War of Independence, in which six Arab armies invaded the new-born state, but were utterly defeated, and the 1967 Six-Day War, in which those same armies once again invaded Israel. In that war, Israel conquered the Gaza Strip, the vast Sinai Peninsula, and the Golan Heights. And Israel also *repossessed* the provinces of Judea/Sumaria, (the "West Bank"), and the eastern part of Jerusalem, which had been occupied by the Jordanians nineteen years earlier, when they invaded the just new-born Jewish state. In order to achieve peace with Egypt, Israel returned to it all of the Sinai. Israel is and has always been prepared to grant full autonomy to the Arabs living in Judea/Sumaria. It is clear to all knowledgeable in military matters that, for immutable strategic reason, Israel cannot for any foreseeable future abandon or yield military control of Judea/Sumaria (the "West Bank") and of the Golan Heights.

The Myth of Greater Israel. Israel is one of the smallest countries in the world. Most people don't realize how small it really is. One wonders whether those who keep talking about "Greater Israel" and who wish to pressure Israel to divest itself of a big chunk of its territory are aware of it. A look at the map is revealing. Including the vaunted "West Bank," the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights, the entire area of the country is barely over 10,000 square miles. France is twenty times as large as Israel, California fifteen times as large, Syria about seven times as large, and "tiny" Ecuador ten times as large. Israel is so small that its area is less than half the size of San Bernardino County, California; if it were dropped into Lake Michigan it would disappear from sight without a trace. The Arab counties in contrast are huge—they occupy twice the area of the United States. Greater Israel, indeed!



Greater Israel? It's a myth. See for yourself!

It is clear that the concept of "Greater Israel," lacks any validity and has no basis in fact. To apply such a concept to a country as small as Israel would almost seem a mockery. Obviously, Israel has no territorial ambitions. All it wants is to live in peace within secure and defensible borders, just as any other country and as required under U.N. Resolution No. 242. But it seems that the *size* of Israel, whether "greater" or "lesser" is not at all the concern of Israel's implacable Arab enemies. The very *existence* of Israel, of a Jewish state in their midst of whatever size, is unacceptable to the Arabs. And unless that mindset changes, not until the Arab states have become democracies and have come to full acceptance of Israel, are willing to make *true* peace with it, and are prepared to establish normal and friendly relations with Israel can any possible territorial adjustment be considered. As it looks right now, that may still take some time.

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gent men and women are likely to see all this as a rootless academic fantasy, mimicking on a smaller scale Mao's Cultural Revolution (which Jameson is willing to defend). Fortunately, it has no victims aside from the occasional unlucky male who speaks his mind. Yet the effects are still serious; the humanities are corrupted in the academy, the institution intended to do society's purest and most serious thinking for it. Again and again Ellis convicts the revolutionaries of ignorance and bad faith, the undoing of enlightenment.

He sees little prospect of early change. In the graduate schools there are many who prefer this kind of militancy to literature (even if they acknowledge that the word still means something); and there are also those who see race-gender-class criticism as the only kind that will get them a job. A few years ago I was invited to a conference organized by the graduate society of an American university. The students ran the conference themselves, choosing a visiting speaker and arranging a program of many short papers based on current research by members of their own and neighboring schools. Three years ago most were on identifiably literary topics. Looking at the program of the 1997 conference, still announced as having to do with "English," I see that there are papers on such topics as the gendering of popular morality in certain nineteenth-century novels, the cultural politics of domesticity in a novel by Harriet Beecher Stowe, Mother in the Holocaust, Toni Morrison's feminized historical epic, and so forth; even a talk on Milton's Chaos is titled "Politics of Representation." There is hardly a trace of anything that promises *disinterested* critical inquiry.

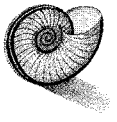
Several of the speakers in this program are known to me as lively and intelligent students whom one would look forward to having as colleagues a few years on. But they have decided, with the connivance of many of their professors, that there is no future in literature. Like their mentors, they will use their jobs in English departments for nonliterary purposes, and they will train another generation to do likewise. So, as Ellis says, they will join the party that mostly confines its researches to the support of pre-established opinions. They will teach economics, politics, law, medicine, sociology—almost any subject except literature. Usually they will lack any serious professional training in those alternative subjects, and will be justly disregarded by scholars who have it. They will become "late" Marxists when the world at large has been forced to abandon Marxism; they will describe doctors as exploiters and oppressors of women; and so forth. Or they will desert the academy in understandable disgust.

Ellis reasonably describes this prospect as an "intellectual catastrophe." There have been fads and fashions before, and they have passed; but this one has resulted in the creation of new, self-perpetuating university departments and has packed existing departments with sympathizers. He does take heart from a few signs that some have lost their nerve, sanitizing their vitae and editing out some audacities and follies before publishing their books. And it is true that the power of the race-gender-class ideologues is virtually limited to the campus; but the harm is still great. Do you want these people to teach your children?

It is possible to accept most of Ellis's argument without endorsing it all. His attack on affirmative action is not essential to his case, and depends too much on his conviction that the provision of "high-quality" public education is such that affirmative action is unnecessary and counterproductive: public education, he believes, *is* affirmative action. The abolition of all other forms of affirmative action is about the only reform he proposes, though he also thinks that deans should forbid the use of class time for purposes of propaganda rather than the pursuit of disinterested knowledge. Of course, it will be alleged that he himself, whether consciously or not, has a political program. But he is surely right to say that instructors should not use their classes to convert students to their own political and social agendas.

A better hope lies in literature itself, for it has powers that a remnant of intelligent readers will always acknowledge and support. The same readers will despise the prefabricated and jargon-ridden language of their contemporaries. It might take time for them to make a difference—generations, perhaps. But Ellis himself dwells on the quite sudden and unforeseen onset of the changes he deplores; one can hope for another turn of the wheel. Perhaps the practitioners of race-gender-class criticism will grow discontented with their sterility and, not wishing to seem dull and ridiculous, seek to regain contact with the fine things, and the sane people, they have exiled from their conversation. But one has to agree that it doesn't, at present, seem very likely.

BRIEF REVIEWS



Angel in the Whirlwind: The Triumph of the American Revolution

by Benson Bobrick. Simon & Schuster, 553 pages, $30.00.

Mr. Bobrick's history of the American Revolution is not, he declares, written to promote any revisionist theories or supersede any previous works. His ancestors fought on both sides in the war, and he has an enthusiastic personal interest in it. Such an interest is the only sound reason for writing history, and in this instance has produced a splendidly lively retelling of "a remarkable story." Mr. Bobrick does not hurry his narrative. He includes minor but meaningful details. He establishes the background of important people. He explains the kind of regulations that had galled the Colonists for years: "As early as 1699, the Crown had banned the exportation to England of American wool or woolen materials," to protect the British cloth trade. He de-

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scribes the construction of the *Turtle*, "the first submarine in military history," although she accomplished nothing against a British copper-bottom. He quotes lavishly and effectively from letters by men who were not haunted by nitpicking journalists and had no need to mask themselves with bland governmentese—a language happily undeveloped in those days. One encounters, directly, Jefferson's liking for formally polished rhetoric, Adams's lawyerly addiction to accumulated evidence, and Washington's awe-inspiring ability to combine—with no hint of effort—lucidity, courtesy, and enormous practical intelligence. The courtesy was maintained even in bizarre circumstances. When "Light-Horse" Harry Lee proposed the ferocious execution of deserters, Washington advised moderation. Beheading, he thought, "had better be omitted."

Straight Man

by Richard Russo.
Random House, 391 pages, $25.00.

Mr. Russo's latest novel is designed to provide intelligent entertainment and does precisely that. His protagonist is a mildly discontented, semi-burnt-out academic who, as chairman of the English department at a state university constantly threatened with budget cuts, takes mischievous pleasure in upsetting the eccentric members of his disorderly platoon. One would not expect to find this sly boat-rocker on a television newscast flourishing a live goose and threatening a massacre of ducks. Mr. Russo brings that and subsequent uproars off deftly, with crackling dialogue, persuasive characters, and amusing satire.

The Merry Heart

by Robertson Davies.
Viking, 385 pages, $27.95.

This collection of speeches and occasional pieces by the late novelist allows a reader to enjoy the company of a fine writer with a great love of books and a great range of knowledge and ideas. Some of Davies's ideas are iconoclastic, and will delight those who share them while stimulating those who do not. All his judgments are interesting, steeped in humanism, and most elegantly put.

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Perdido

by Rick Collignon.
MacMurray & Beck, 221 pages,
$19.50.

The protagonist of Mr. Collignon's novel is Will Sawyer, a dropout from gringo society who has landed comfortably in a small mountain town in New Mexico. The local language is Spanish, but most of the inhabitants are bilingual, which has enabled Sawyer to get by for nearly twenty years with a limited grip on Spanish. He has a house, a sufficiently prosperous contracting business in partnership with his friend Felipe, and a casual mistress. He also has a great interest in old stories about the town that he considers his home. The old stories are usually just that—what can be done about skeletons found years ago in the loft of a church?—but one story is recent enough, and odd enough, to provoke Sawyer's curiosity. He begins asking questions. To his surprise, this sets off an eruption of anger and outrage and actual danger. Years of resentment against Anglo meddling and Anglo money come to the surface, showing Sawyer his alien status and reminding the reader of the subtlety and persistence of inherited cultural attitudes. These sociological underpinnings rarely appear on the novel's surface, which offers fine descriptions of scenery and weather, small-town chitchat, complaints about irrigation water—until the violence breaks out. Mr. Collignon has created a distinct and meaningful world.

Inventing Memory

by Erica Jong.
HarperCollins, 300 pages,
$25.00.

Ms. Jong's novel begins in the twenty-first century, with a young woman engaged in research on the history of Jews in America. She finds her own female ancestors and puts together a partly imaginary, partly documented account of their doings. It amounts to a survey of what women with nerve and talent have accomplished in the twentieth century. Sarah, fleeing Russian pogroms, arrived around 1900 and achieved great success as a portrait painter. Her daughter Salome fled to Paris in the 1920s, met everyone from Picasso to Edith Wharton, wrote controversial novels, and produced Sally, a singer wildly admired in public and neurotically miserable in private. The editor is Sally's daughter, who has not yet done anything remarkable. The affairs of these women are interlocked throughout with events in the world at large. Because the book is a feminist history, the male characters (with one major exception) are poor investments, but the author has given the boys a fair shake. They are not stereotyped boobs and boors but men with reason for their disabilities. Ms. Jong's writing sparkles with wit and intelligence all the way, as one would expect from this highly accomplished author.

Los Alamos

by Joseph Kanon.
Broadway, 403 pages,
$25.00.

Expert writing, an adroitly managed plot, and a totally convincing evocation of the last months of the Second World War make this espionage novel well worth the attention of serious readers. Mr. Kanon introduces ethical concerns that reach beyond the genre's standard questions of who is stealing information or plotting sabotage.

The Maya Textile Tradition

edited by Margot Blum Schevill,
photographs by Jeffrey Jay Foxx.
Abrams, 232 pages,
$49.50.

The authors who provide the text for Mr. Foxx's brilliant photographs present weaving as a survival of Mayan religion and a symbol of the whole Mayan civilization, and their accounts of the geography, history, and accomplishments of the Maya make that interpretation believable. The book is beautiful to look at, whether or not one has an interest in Mayan culture.

—Phoebe-Lou Adams

Recent books by *Atlantic* authors:

Know Thine Enemy: A Spy's Journey Into Revolutionary Iran *by Edward Shirley. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 247 pages, $24.00.* A portion of this book first appeared, in somewhat different form, as "Not Fanatics, and Not Friends," in the December, 1993, *Atlantic Monthly*.

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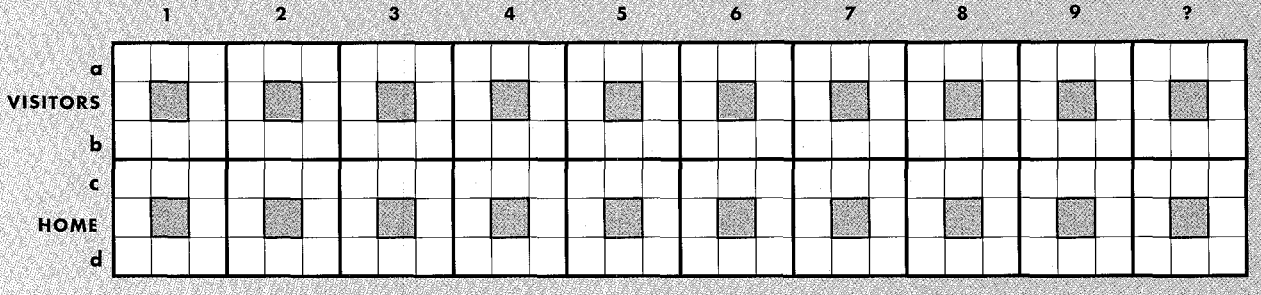
THE PUZZLER

by Emily Cox and Henry Rathvon

Scoreboard

This puzzle's grid represents a baseball scoreboard, with answers to clues entered Across and Down and heavy bars serving only to separate the innings. Across entries are clued in order of their appearance in the rows labeled **a**–**d**. Each Across entry is either six or nine letters long, spanning two or three complete innings. The 18 clued Down entries are all seven letters long and belong in the columns not containing shaded squares. In each inning one Down answer's *first* letter should be removed to the shaded square in the *top* of the inning, and the other Down answer's *last* letter should be removed to the shaded square in the *bottom* of the inning; solvers must determine which is which. When nine innings are completed, the letters in their 18 shaded squares will lead to each team's score; these scores may be entered in the last two shaded squares. Finally (and fittingly, we hope), the site of the game will be seen in the last two, unclued six-letter Downs. Answers include two proper names. Those are the ground rules—now, play ball!



The solution to last month's Puzzler appears on page 97.
The winner of the April Puzzler contest is Richard K. Garter, of North Muskegon, Michigan.

Across

a. Pitcher and catcher entering a melee
I stirred up little by little
At first, behold two under dog
Look into eating second piece of sushi, marine creature with spines (*two words*)
Such flaky sopranos go downhill fast

b. Something chewy eaten by General Bean
Bell and General Electric brought back a holiday drink
Shed in marsh
Move like a giant assortment of boards
Punch captures a tuba's sound

c. Doctor outside Nice fixed cut fine
Again engage rebuffed woman's wrath
Girl's name is unknown in part of the Northeast
One kind of tree in New Mexico is not healthy
Try love after lithium for psychic energy

d. Card in coaster went laterally
Day care centers operate from behind chains
Kill listener with charm
Minimally promote wacky *SNL* dueler

Down

1. Associate blurred vision with fortune-teller
Make-believe gin mixed into chow

2. Partially crimped edges stayed
Throw to left end and laugh

3. Chicken portion comes with beeper
Art even troubled old-timer

4. Trace of iodine found in skeleton behind eastern woods
Way of reckoning time involving top of ladies' underwear

5. Accumulate around a small underground pipe (*two words*)
Copies of cipher kept by ancient king

6. Rage about leader of Austria—the idiot
Worked as an attendant for some paper in South Dakota

7. Briefly describe all but the beginning of shtick about Liberal
Bed receives ultimate in acclaim for coziness

8. In shade, somewhat regular
Defenseless nude wandering around a room

9. Oblique figure agitated mob in mad rush
Fifty dividing hot, sweet bread

Note: The instructions above are for this month's puzzle only. It is assumed that you know how to decipher clues. For a complete introduction to clue-solving, send an addressed, stamped long envelope to The Atlantic Puzzler, 77 North Washington Street, Boston, Mass. 02114.

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WORD WATCH

by Anne H. Soukhanov

A selection of terms that have newly been coined, that have recently acquired new currency, or that have taken on new meanings, compiled by the executive editor of The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Third Edition.

broadbanding *noun*, a new promotion-and-pay structure in which workers spend most of their careers within a single but very wide salary grade: "Your next promotion could be a lateral move. That's the idea behind *broadbanding*, a pay structure that's being embraced by an increasing number of companies" (*Wall Street Journal*).

BACKGROUND: Traditionally, many companies have had as many as 25 salary grades, most of them fairly narrow; however, with *broadbanding* a company may have as few as two. *Broadbanding* is part of a general trend away from hierarchical corporate structures. It allows managers greater flexibility: for example, they can give employees raises without officially promoting them, and can move employees into different slots and teach them new skills without having to consider whether the changes technically constitute promotions or demotions. However, some employees are loath to give up the status and perks that often come with advancement in a multi-tiered system. Other critics argue that *broadbanding* allows companies to avoid giving raises even when an employee's duties are expanded, and that the potential inequities of the system may lead some employees to seek out practitioners of *career coaching*—an unlicensed but rapidly growing profession, dating from the early 1980s—who offer job and sometimes personal guidance for a hefty fee.

cultural transvestitism *noun*, the imitation of the habits of violent inner-city gangs by privileged white youths: "Her script is about the '*cultural transvestitism*' of rich, white youth mimicking South-Central Los Angeles' dangerous club scene" (*The* [London] *Times*).

BACKGROUND: This word was propelled into the language by Jessica Kaplan, who was 17 when she wrote the movie script described above. Kaplan's rich young characters go to a school that, she says, "doesn't have a culture of its own, so it's copying the language and clothes of others" (*Wall Street Journal*). The phenomenon Kaplan describes recalls a word discussed in this space in 1993: the offensive slang term *wiggers*, used for white teenagers who affect the mannerisms of inner-city African-American youths. Whether the phrase *cultural transvestitism* will in time acquire a broader meaning—coming to stand for the imitation of any group by another—remains to be seen.

medical foods *plural noun*, attractively packaged medications that typically come in the form of cookies, pastries, candy bars, and other snacks. Also called *nutriceuticals*: "These products, some available now and some on the drawing board, are part of a potentially huge market in '*nutriceuticals*,' what the U.S. Food and Drug Administration classifies as '*medical foods*'" (*Boston Globe*).

BACKGROUND: To meet the FDA's definition, a *medical food* must help to control a disease that is not otherwise treatable through diet, and must be recommended by a physician. One example: a "candy bar" containing three sources of glucose, intended for insulin-taking diabetics and eaten at bedtime to prevent nocturnal hypoglycemia. Though the term *medical foods* is relatively new, *nutriceuticals* goes back at least to 1991.

stork parking *noun*, choice parking spots, near store entrances, that are reserved for expectant and new mothers: "Don't even think of parking there, mister. Those pink . . . parking spaces bearing a stork insignia are for new moms and moms-to-be. Called '*stork parking*,' these doorfront spaces are popping up nationwide at supermarkets, discount stores and even a baseball stadium" (*USA Today*).

BACKGROUND: Also called *maternity parking*, *stork parking* can be traced as far back as 1994. Originally concentrated in the South, it is starting to catch on elsewhere in the country.

sucker bomb *noun*, *slang*, an explosive whose main purpose is to lure the police and others to the scene, so that a second bomb can be deployed to maximum effect: "Anti-terrorist groups call them '*sucker bombs*.' The bomber draws a crowd with one device, purely to detonate a second, often more powerful device in their midst" (*New York Times*).

BACKGROUND: *Sucker bombs* have long been used by overseas terrorist groups intent on injuring or killing law-enforcement and rescue personnel as well as civilians. The term gained wider currency in this country last January, after a *sucker bomb* was used in an attack on an Atlanta family-planning clinic.

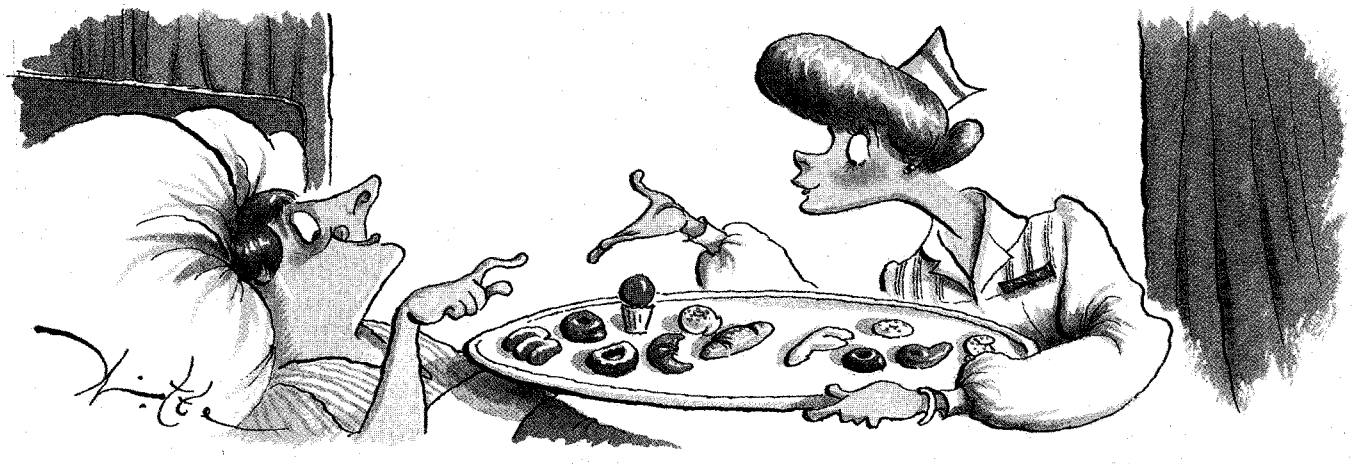

Illustration by Michael C. Witte

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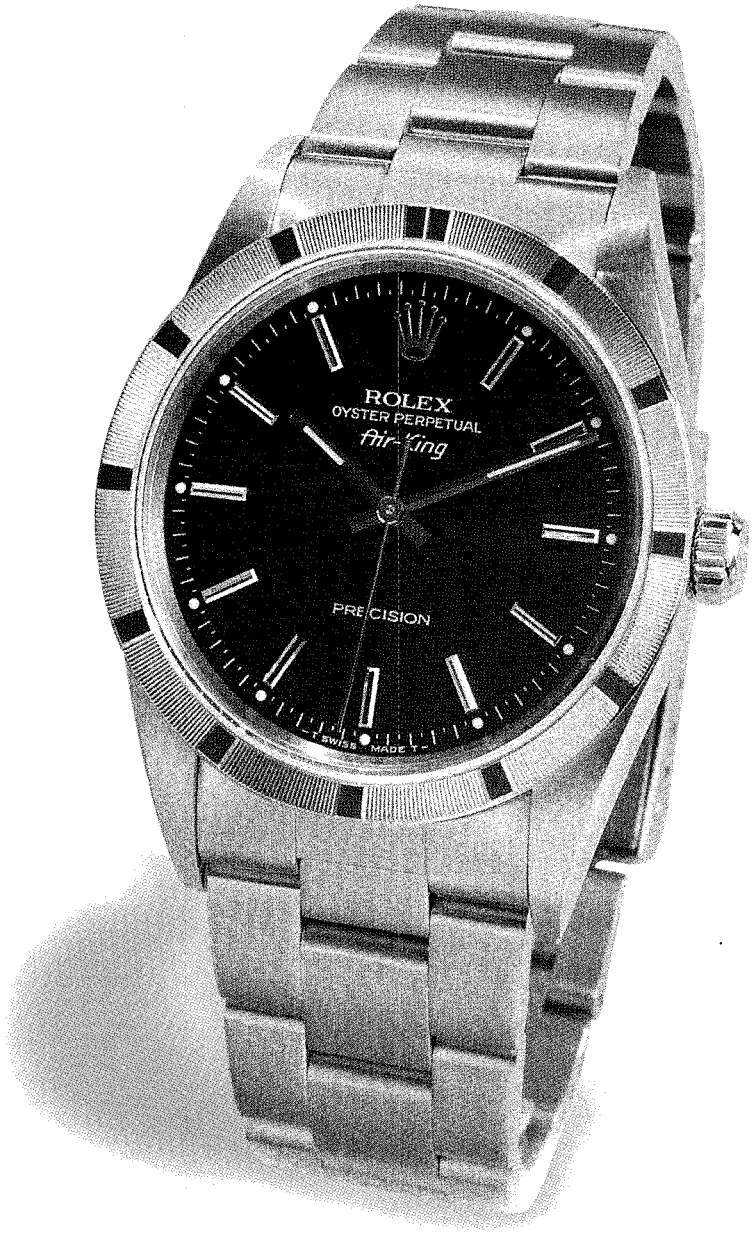

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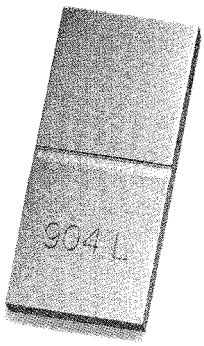

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